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# Performing Home:
# à la Turca Foodscapes in London

by

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**Declaration**

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of the university or other institute of higher learning, except where due acknowledgment has been made in the text.

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**Abstract**

The research at hand investigates how home is performed through foodscapes by focusing on the Turkish speaking communities in London. It is based on the premises that food has a strong connection to not just where home is, but how it manifests itself at different scales and registers of food activities in the 'here and now' of so-called migrant communities. Home is therefore taken as an act of dwelling that is both constitutive of and constituted by the specificities of the site of habitation. Based on Ingold's conceptualisation of dwelling perspective, the research argues that the migrant skills deployed around food are trained and practiced in response to the environment of habitation (1993, 2000) as opposed to being imported as innate skills from the country of origin. Explored through the acts of eating, cooking, serving, sharing, celebrating and talking about food puissantly problematises the frameworks of host & guest *migrants* and home & host *nations*. Reflecting upon the constitution of home through food therefore has a double function: it liberates *migrant homes* from the geographical dominance of a past country where they are from and at the same time recognises the site-specific manifestations of their skills "within the current of their involved activity, in the specific relational contexts of their practical engagement with their surroundings" (Ingold 2000, p. 186).

The economic, social, cultural and affective mobilisations of the members of Turkish Speaking Community in London display the dynamism and heterogeneity that is inherent to both food and home.

The variety of the ways in which the ethnically and linguistically diverse members of this vaguely framed group relate to themselves, to each other, to the city and to the larger discourses of community and nation are explored in this research through performative and multi-sited ethnographic tools. From shopping together with the participants for the dinner ingredients to formal interview settings, from cooking along to temporarily managing an eating out establishment, practicing with and within the contexts of the participants contributed to the knowledge formation for this research. Three interrelated yet distinct foodscape clusters emerged out of this research: Restaurants, British Kebab Awards and the households. The term *foodscape* here aims at encapsulating the multiscalar, interconnected, always in-the-making and at times inconsistent practices and discourses that emerge in each of these sites. Even though all ethnographic encounters took place in London, in a seemingly singular site, the research gained a multi-sited character due to the different power dynamics, ethnographic requirements, and different imaginaries offered by each of these clusters.

These three registers, in their heterogeneity, show that home, looked especially through the lens of food, appears to be re-creative, generative, tactical, site-specific, and multifold series of dwelling acts, rather than being the geographical elsewhere of a *migrant*. By means of food, the *migrant* becomes the skillful dweller, and London becomes home.

## Introduction

Food is not always made at home, but it makes home. A complex series of interactions, creations and moments of habitation manifest themselves through the material forms and symbolic meanings food takes *across* time and space. Food is expressive, as the meal brought to the table tells much about the dietary preferences, health concerns, spaces of longing and places of belonging of the people who prepare and consume it. But food does more than just being the medium of expression for the preset cartographies of social beings; it is not just the medium through which social, cultural and economic habitus express their dynamics. Food comes into being as edible, as acceptable, as servable in response to all these, and in return constitutes the very socialities that make it possible. In every meal cooked, every recipe that is re-created, there is an act of world-making. In every opportunity of commensality, food re-manages the relations, reiterates and/or challenges hierarchies, knowledges, places. Food, in its discursive and practical utterances *makes us* make, and it makes our homes. By feeding we survive, and by making food we become.

Food is always engaged in movement and compels the one that engages with it to move. From its oral inception to excretion, food moves within the confines of a single body and makes the body move, whether partially and sometimes unnoticingly through the acts of mastication, swallowing, contractions of the stomach, interaction with the hundreds of thousands of bacteria in our gut. Prior to being an object to be eaten, it requires acts of growing, collecting, gathering and transporting to reach the stages of preparing and cooking.

Food constantly moves between forms (i.e. from an agricultural product to a dish at the table) and it makes people move (i.e. to tend a field or for acts of provision). It moves within and beyond the body, the imagined boundaries of cities or nations, transgressing constantly the inside and outside, moving *along* a continuum of grounds and forms, a peristalsis that is all-encompassing.

This continuum, from an anthropocentric point of view and a disregard for the fact that nothing disappears in nature but journeys through forms, is also perceived and experienced as a finitude when it comes to social materiality of everyday life. Once eaten, the meal is finished. The hunger is always only temporarily satiated. There is always a next meal to have. This next meal has to be re-created, if not from scratch, then from the leftovers, as a new experience. Even when one cooks the same recipe over and over again, no dish or meal is the same, once re-iterated, be it for the company that joins the eater or arising from the slightly different ingredients or even due to the changing setting of consumption. Whether one cooks or microwaves a ready-made, pre-packaged dish, or eats out, the necessity of food intake, an infinite necessity for survival combined with its finite and temporary capacity to satiate hunger, constantly forces the eater to move, to choose, to engage and to re-create. In everyday life, rarely we think about the journey of an edible item this exhaustively, from nature to processing sites, from processing to shops, from shops to tables, from tables to stomachs, from stomachs back to nature; and yet, constantly, we engage with such mobility.

This research is based on these key properties of food: its symbolic and material mobility that becomes particularly significant when looking at migrant foodscapes; and its finitude and constant need for replenishment that further gives it a performative quality. Based on the various food activities of Turkish speaking communities' dwelling in London, this thesis explores the ways in which homes and experiences of homeliness express themselves through the skills acquired, enacted and represented by means of food; and in return aims to rescue the migrant homes from the spectres of elsewhere and bring it to the here and now. The thesis furthermore hopes that the dynamism with which Turkish speaking people experience homeliness at heterologous registers of foodscapes can act as a reminder of the creativity inherent in food practices, home-making and in acts of co-habitation.

**Food and Migration**

Food provides a rich way of accessing migration stories and its potential has been used by a series of researches in different disciplines to unveil narratives of migrant home-making projects. The majority of these researches focus on the relationship between food and construction of identity, one that is ethnic and marked by an interminable status of guest, in the land of the host country. Food, in these accounts, appears as the carrier and enabler of memories, a reproductive tool that operates by means of the principles of longing for, and/or carrying the burden of, the home that is located elsewhere (Caglar 1995, Chapman and Beagan 2013, Kalcik 1984, Harbottle 2000, Ray 2004, Parasecoli 2014, Vallianatos and Raine 2008).

Some of these researches fill a great gap in unveiling the complex ways in which identities, bodies, spaces and experiences of displacement and replacement interact. They furthermore recognise food's value in these processes, not as a superficial cultural artifact, an object of heritage but as a "total social fact" (Mauss 1966 [1924], p.81) constitutive of social realities, "as an activity that has implications throughout society, in the economic, legal, political, and religious spheres" (ibid.). Kalcik, with an approach to ethnic identity as processual and performative, analyses the Vietnamese food infrastructure's transformation in USA through the processes of acculturation and hybridisation (1984, p.39). Initially a way of "maintaining and celebrating ethnic identity" (in Bell and Valentine 2006, p.116), "the ethnic cuisine becomes modified to suit local food habits" and at the same time "members of the host community begin to sample the ethnic cuisine, to get used to its presence, and frequently come to enjoy it" (ibid.).

Sabar and Posner's work on Eritrean and Sudanese asylum seekers' experiences in Tel Aviv points out how their restaurants, perceived as 'traditional', but also highly transnational, ethnically diverse and culturally hybrid, provide "culinary safe heavens" by evoking a familiar environment that is also felt as safe (2013, p.198, in Abbots 2016, p.118). Raspa's study of the Italian-American community in Mormon Utah (1984) similarly looks at how preserving a distinct Italian cuisine is a key component of nostalgic enactment of identity (in Bell and Valentine 2006, p.116). While all these authors recognise "the malleability of foodways in the negotiation of identifications" (Ibid.), they also emphasise the reiterative function food and food activities play in the lives of migrants, evoking a sense of the country of origin through familiar sense-scapes.

As Abbots frames this, "these practices can effectively transport migrants back 'home'" (Abbots 2016, p.118).

These works also take belonging as a function of identity work and they assume a culinary knowledge and practice acquired in the country of origin, that one engages with nostalgically and through which a home, that is also instituted elsewhere and forever located there, finds means of expression through mnemonic sensory reproductions or re-organisation of food infrastructure (including the ordering of meals and/or the meals themselves and/or their purposes). No matter how nuanced, these researches assume a culinary knowledge and practice acquired in the country of origin, that one engages with nostalgically and through which a home, that is also instituted elsewhere and forever located there, finds means to remind, reproduce itself. Inevitably these contribute to conceptualisations of homes enacted by migrants and their food relations, as mainly governed by rules of migrancy and ethnicity. Even the most nuanced studies among the works on food and migration, such as Ray's research on first and second generation middle-class Bengali-Americans, *The Migrant's Table* (2004) and his more recent work, *The Ethnic Restaurateur* (2016), take as their guiding principle the primacy of migrancy. Sharing the sensitivities that gave rise to an intersectional approach (Yuval-Davis 2007, 2011) that tries to liberate social occasions and becomings from the dominance of a single identity (in this case the status of migrant) and following first Ray's invitation to reinstitute the authority of the agents of 'ethnic' cuisines, and, taking one step further, Hage's invitation to locate the migrant home here and now (1997), this thesis would like to suggest that the migrant is already at home.

An ethnography of the food activities of Turkish speaking 'migrants' in London, at various registers shows that the creative and world-making capacity of food is deployed as an act of "dwelling" that is responsive to the ground where it takes place. Seen through the lens of foodscapes, the here and now quality of home becomes more visible. If one looks for home-making possibilities as informed by stories of migrancy but not necessarily dictated by these, another narrative that emphasises the relational nature of home-making emerges. This relationality that a research on Turkish speaking migrants suggest, however, is not one that oscillates between two geographically set-apart locations, one that overemphasizes the location as origin of the food and the migrant and of the food of the migrant; but one that displays how food became a puissant economic activity in London for already London-dwelling Turkish speaking community, and how the activities around food, at different scales, create a meta-narrative of their own, displaying 'at-home'ness. As such, it is more about the prodigious feats of connection that food establishes between people and spaces in London, through the skills enacted in the fulfillment of food-related acts. Every journey through food hides an exquisite complexity of negotiations and deployment of cultural, social and financial capitals. This study shows that, in the case of the foodscapes enacted by the members of Turkish Speaking community, these negotiations do not always take place in reference to a country of origin, whether in an eating out establishment, as part of an awards ceremony or within households. Therefore, home appears not as a concept of belonging, but one of dwelling, one that is about becoming and doing, enmeshing a series of skills and relations that not only respond, but also move along the ground of habitation.

In the following section, I will discuss the key conceptualisations that guided this research.

**(Migrant) Homes**

Hage, noting the distinction between home as (material) construction – *house* - and home as the affective social unity - *family* - in reference to Emile Benveniste's work, defines home-building "as *the building of the feeling of being 'at home'* (Emphasis original, Hage 1997, p.100). Theorised as an affective construct, Hage argues that four key feelings need to be met for "home to come into being, to be successfully erected": security, familiarity, community and a sense of possibility or hope. Security's necessary but insufficient condition is "the availability of what we consider as necessary to the satisfaction of basic needs and from the absence of harmful threatening otherness" (Ibid.). For a deeper sense of security and homeliness, one needs to feel as a wilful subject in the home and *empowered to seek* (Ibid.). Related to this sense of security is the spatial and practical control that is obtained through a maximisation of the spatial dispositions, notes Hage following Bourdieu, "a well-fitted *habitus*", the implicit yet familiarity-requiring knowledge of "what everything is for and when it ought to be used". The feeling of community, "a feeling of shared symbolic forms, shared morality, shared values and most importantly perhaps, shared language" is also a must for feeling at home according to Hage. The fourth and final condition for home to distinguish itself from a shelter and to be experienced as homeliness, is to be in:

> [...] a space open for opportunities and hope [...] open enough so that one can perceive opportunities of a 'better-life': the opportunity to develop certain capacities and skills, the opportunity of personal growth and more generally, the availability of opportunities for 'advancement' whether as upward social mobility, emotional growth, or in the form of accumulation of symbolic or monetary capital.
>
> (Ibid.)

Hage's conceptualisation is noteworthy, as it moves beyond the narratives of migrant homes as governed by rules of nostalgia, and migrants as a "depressed mob" that desperately seeks "an imaginary homely past as a hiding place from the present time and space". Rather nostalgia, when present, contributes to the here and now of home-building by migrants (Hage 1997, p.100-107). But more importantly, the affective economy Hage mentions, operating at different levels, requires active engagement with, and acquisition and improvement of, various *skills*, social, cultural and economic capitals. Based on Hage's conceptualisation but to further highlight the importance of skills deployed around food in home-building projects, I will now give consideration to "Dwelling perspective" of Ingold. Through an understanding of home as dwelling, one sees that foodscapes offers not just "intimations of homeliness" (Hage 1997) but that actually they are the very practices and condition of homeliness.

**The Dwelling Perspective**

Ingold, in his early essay "The Temporality of the Landscape" (1993) defines landscape, according to the dwelling perspective, as "[...] constituted as an enduring record of –and testimony to- the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in so doing, have left there something of themselves" (1993, p.152). "Human life is a process" he notes, and "this life-process is also the process of formation of the landscapes in which people have lived" (Ibid.) Carrying an agenda of moving beyond "the sterile opposition between the naturalistic view of the landscape as a neutral, external backdrop to human activities, and the culturalistic view that every landscape is a particular cognitive or symbolic ordering of space" (Ibid.), Ingold notes "[...] in dwelling in the world, we do not act *upon* it, or do things *to* it; rather we move along *with* it. Our actions do not transform the world, they are part and parcel of the world's transforming itself" (Emphasis original, Ibid. p.164). Landscapes are never complete, "neither built or unbuilt", but they are under perpetual construction through the acts of dwelling (p.162). Tasks, "any practical operation, carried out by a skilled agent in an environment, as part of his or her normal business of life" are constitutive of acts of dwelling. Ingold furthermore notes "Every task takes its meaning from its position within an ensemble of tasks, performed in series or in parallel, and usually by many people working together" and it is this "entire ensemble of tasks, in their mutual interlocking" that is encapsulated in the concept of *taskscape* (p.158).

Central to the dwelling perspective and the formation of taskscapes is their distinction from the building perspective. In reference to Heidegger's seminal work "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" ([1971] 2008), Ingold refuses a self-contained individual that confronts a world out there and argues in favor of what phenomenology calls "being in the world". While the building perspective suggests that "the worlds are made before they are lived in" (2000, p.179) and that there is "an imagined *separation* between the perceiver and the world, such that the perceiver has to reconstruct the world, in the mind, prior to any meaningful engagement with it" (p.178) a dwelling perspective suggests that all meaningful and useful engagement with the world happens in the relationality and temporality of the taskscapes. "We do not dwell because we have built, but we build and have built because we dwell" (Heidegger [1971] 2008, p. 350) and dwelling is not an act of inhabiting a physical, symbolic or natural structure, but the very condition of that structure's form.

Ingold's theory has multiple implications for the study of food and migration, and conceptualisations of migrant homes. The phenomenological "being in the world" first and foremost reminds us that there is an *encounter* between the migrant, the place of settlement and acts of settlement. Neither the migrant nor the settlement place, or the newly acquired neighbours and the set of livelihood activities they engage in, are separate entities that "confront" each other. Ingold notes, quoting Merleau-Ponty "I am 'at my task rather than confronting it'" (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p.416 in Ingold 1993, p.159). Things and time do not have a passage that one can "stand aside and observe", but this passage of time is "indeed, none other than our *own* journey through the taskscape in the business of dwelling" (Emphasis original, Ingold 1993, p.159).

The constitution of the taskscapes is also relational and is an enmeshment of acts of being, caring and constructing. "[...] [P]eople, in the performance of their tasks, *also attend to one another*" (Emphasis original, ibid., p.160). Ingold furthermore reminds us of Heidegger's etymological exercise about the verb 'to build', *bauen* in German. Owing its roots to Old English and High German, *buan,* originally meaning 'to dwell', Heidegger tells us that the word *buan* used to encapsulate the following interrelated meanings: to be (I am, *Ich bin*); to protect, preserve and care for; and to construct, to build (Heidegger [1971] 2008, p.348-350). Over time, Heidegger notes, the meaning referring to the act of being (in the world), "The proper sense of *bauen,* namely dwelling [fell] into oblivion" (p.350), and the word *bauen* meant building referring either to act of cultivation as in preservation and building as constructing (p.349). This relationality inherent to the taskscapes means that the migrants are not in a vacuum of migrancy from which they respond to a site and the other people who dwell in proximity, but taskscapes come into being through contact. Dismantling the hierarchy between the *pre*-conceptions of the built worlds we inhabit, to state that "people do not *import* their ideas, plans or mental representations into the world" (Ingold 2000, p.186) shows that migrants do not adhere to a pre-set design -a 'migrant' *habitus* any more than any other dweller. The migrancy does not guarantee or deprive one of any set of skills, rather these are constantly enriched, eliminated, modified, filtered, re-formed, extrapolated. This is not to deny that migration, or any other human mobility, means a change of setting, a relative change in landscape; or to deny that through mobilities, we also displace *along* with sets of skills, mostly embodied, the social, cultural, financial capitals, a *habitus* of and in practice (Bourdieu (1977) 2013).

Such perspective further places the emphasis on the continuous and relational, *interactive* as Ingold calls it, and posits making of these skills as part of taskscapes we are engaged in, thus landscapes we dwell. The dwelling perspective hereby verges on the intersectional and performative conceptions of identity in its recognition of the enmeshed relationship between *doing* identity and *being* in the world. The intersectional approaches to being and belonging suggest that (nation) states and identity lens can no longer provide a satisfactory framework in understanding the complexities of everyday ontologies (Yuval-Davis 2007, 2011).

The thesis diverges from the intersectional theory as, instead of doing an analysis of belonging and citizenship, this research finds that everyday acts of doing -taskscapes- instituted around food are not governed by the citizenship status of the migrant-dweller. With a dwelling approach, the focus is further shifted to 'making' home, as opposed to belonging; and more specifically to making home by means of food. The concern is neither to analyse the performative aspects of identity -identity 'as' work or identity 'at' work (Olmedo 2015), but to suggest that skillful agents are already at work, and homes are possible by the unfolding of their taskscapes. Along with the performative approaches to identity, it reiterates that it is by doing that we are, but instead of doing identity, it is home that we do, by encountering.

The dwelling perspective therefore liberates the migrant to a certain extent from migrancy, and migrant homes from being regarded as temporarily and nostalgically bound by elsewhere. The everyday of the migrant is understood, accordingly, not as an act of settlement where the rules of a pre-set cartography tries to be applied to the realities of the present situ, and their level of success in

matching can be captured by a vocabulary of assimilation and integration, (that the settlers need to go through and the previously settled have to tolerate), but as tactical engagements (De Certeau (1984) 1988) in the affordances of everyday life's taskscapes. Following from this, the will to know focuses no longer on an inquisition as regards to the compatibility of an imagined-as-static individual, group, or their baggage's to-be-acquired fitness to a situ. More fluid, performative and adaptive than identities, are the taskscapes. The will to know, therefore, prioritises exploring how these are negotiated and formed as part of larger, interrelated and multi-scalar taskscapes forming the landscape. Therefore, the dwelling perspective recognises the migrant as a skillful participant of the landscape, an agent in the making of the current form it takes by his or her dwelling. More importantly, recognising the continuity and temporality of landscape formation reminds us that the current form is no less or more valid than any other form in any other point in history. By extension, the thesis suggests that a perspective through food very bluntly reminds us that cityscapes as well as national imaginaries are on-going constructs, as opposed to being containers of identities, cultures, ethnicities, and relatively stable belongings.

**Interdisciplinary Homes**

In the same way that the migrant homes, from the point of view of dwelling perspective, are on-going constructs that can not be easily contained by a single national geography, the thesis at hand feels comfortably at home in at least two disciplines: Performance Studies and Food Studies. Both of these *fields* of studies that are interdisciplinary in their scopes and methodologies deployed, informed this research with their respective sensitivities.

This is a food studies thesis as the main point of exploration is the relational space between acts of home-making and food taskscapes. As such, it heavily relies on the previous literature and research produced by researchers who, across disciplines take the food, the relationalities it creates at the core of their inquiry no matter what their disciplinary backgrounds are. In line with the main sensitivity of the field of Food Studies, the thesis contributes to the question "How to do things with food?" by actually extending the explorations on two related questions: "How do migrants do things with food?" and "How to do home with food?" with the added challenge of "How do migrants imagine themselves, food and home from within the country of dwelling?". The work therefore contributes to a field concerned with the thematic and methodological centrality of food by creating a visibility around the migrant imaginations, by arguing that these are not bound by homes of departure nor entirely marked by nostalgia (Chapter 2, 3, 4) and by suggesting that food taskscapes enacted by the so-called migrants and their imaginations from within need to be seen as integral to nations' on-going formations (Chapter 3).

Consequently, the work is equally a Performance Studies thesis, for its recognition of and emphasis on the performativity of food and homes. Drawing mainly on Butler's work on performativity (*Gender Troubles,* 1990 and *Bodies that Matter,* 1993) and her understanding that reiterations of gender 'acts' both constitute but also are constitutive of what we come to understand, recognise and reproduce as gender; in this thesis I aim at emphasizing the performativity of food and homes in mainly two ways.

Both food and migrant homes come to being through a series of "re-iteration of norms which precede, constrain and exceed the performer" (Butler 1993, p.234), but also in their every performance, they create an effect via "stylised repetition of acts" (Butler 1990, p.140), "confer[ing] a binding power on the action performed" (1993, p.234). The food and homes are therefore constructed by the "very expressions that are said to be [their] results" (1990, p.45). Every meal cooked, re-cooked, improvised carry this double function of performativity: on the one hand it interpellates previous habitus, social and cultural capitals; on the other it re-generates what we understand that dish to be, and the world to be.

The food also yields easily to a performative lens, for its temporary nature and constant need of regeneration is akin to that of a performance. As Phelan (1993, p.146) suggests "Performance's only life is in the present". A meal, once consumed, is already a past event and one that can never be fully replicated whether it is due to the changing ingredients, or the company. As "performance [...] becomes itself through disappearance" (Ibid.), the perishability via being edible and consumable is inherent to very concept of food. I aim therefore at capturing in this thesis the performativity of the food as an effect of its own finite performance, but also exploiting how this very performance –the need for constant regeneration and inability to replicate- complicates and enriches the performativity of food, liberating its reiterations from being simple "replicas of the same" (Butler 1993, p.226) and endowing it with world and home-making capacities.

Moreoever, methodologically the research makes use of performative ethnography in the forms of go-alongs, shop alongs and cook alongs (Chapter 1). The performativity here aims at recognising that the participant observer of the ethnographic field is deeply engaged with the sites of research in constitutive ways, constituting the field, the research, but also the participants and the researcher in every reiteration. Same questions asked repetitively to different participants do not only yield to different answers, but each time requires different relationalities that need to be negotiated between the researcher and the participants as well as the site. The different positions I had to take throughout the different sites and the different tasks I engaged with were acts of dwelling in the site performatively, making me a dweller of London by repeated contact with the participants' creative ways, having effects beyond the research; but also by giving them a reflexive space by means of asking a question, that sometimes altered their point of view about their selves and/or their food tasks.

The Performance and Food Studies paradigms juxtaposed enrich the discussions of nations and nationalisms as well as migrant populations by bringing to light the performative effects of everyday food engagements as constitutive of the very geographical and legal frameworks that bind the conventions and norms. Food therefore dwells in its place of performance by being the task, and by its constitution of the taskscape, it allows, performatively, the skillful migrant to dwell while changing the nation itself. I will elaborate on the concept of foodscape as the effect of food-specific taskscapes and their performative power in the next section[1].

[1] By not adopting a sense of food performance that is theatrical, audience-oriented and for display purposes; and with an emphasis on discursive and world-making capacities of food, the thesis diverges from the works of Joshua

**À La Turca Foodscapes as London Taskscapes**

The concept 'foodscape' is rather loosely deployed across disciplines. Freidberg uses it to refer to the "actual sites where we find food" (2010) whereas Johnston *et al.* (2009) "underline the importance of the built environment as well as the urban and institutional food service settings and define foodscapes as 'the spatial distribution of food across urban spaces and institutional settings'".

Brembeck and Johansson use the term in reference to Appadurai's typology of interconnected scapes: financescapes, ideoscapes, technoscapes, mediascapes and ethnoscapes (Appadurai 1996, Brembeck and Johansson 2010). Remembering Ingold's definition of the taskscape as an "entire ensemble of tasks, in their mutual interlocking" (1993, p.158) and their constitutive power in the making of landscapes, I argue that tasks structured, enacted and made meaningful around interactions with food, constitute foodscapes, a symbolic and material enmeshment of skillful agents' dwelling activities in relation with each other and with the places of settlement.

Hicks further notes of taskcapes that they "emerg[e] through rhythmic, patterned social interaction. They reveal neither form nor 'final product' as 'an object of contemplation' but performance, process and 'the actual work'" (2016, p.8).

Therefore, the activities that constitute foodscapes are processual and temporary performances, but more importantly for the purposes of this research, they encapsulate their performative power. The perpertually under construction,

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Abrams in the field (2013). While it shares sensitivities of Lisa Heldke's more philosophically oriented work bridging the performativity of food as both mental and embodied work (2013), this research further aims at looking at the performances of food alongside the positionality of the skilfull performers, in this case migrants.

heterogenuous activities of foodscapes at various scales and enacted by differently skilled actors, transform the landscapes and grounds where they happen, as much as they are transformed by them, through material and symbolic interaction. Resonating with Appadurai's theorisations of various scapes and mainly based on Ingold's taskscape, the use of the concept of foodscape, in this thesis, aims further at encapsulating the series of interconnected performative engagements that might take place in different sites, or scales; and by their happening they not only display the possibilities of being in the world by doing, but proliferate claims and ways of doing, and through doing, being.

I therefore explore the question 'How do we dwell, by *doing* food?'; and more specifically look at the à la Turca foodscapes that are mainly initiated by Turkish speaking[2] participants who live in London. By deploying 'à la Turca' as opposed to a qualification of these foodscapes as Turkish or Kurdish, I hope to reiterate the dwelling perspective's suggestion that these taskscapes are in making *along* the landscape of London and furthermore that London foodscapes are in making along these taskscapes. Like all ethnic and national categories, Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish-Cypriot are problematic, as it will be shown in the first chapter, and do not serve as guiding terms to refer to particular patterns enacted by a more or less coherent community, given the heterogeneity of identifications and ways of doing. Designating foodscapes with such ethnic or national categories, at times by the impositions of analytical brevity, on the one hand suggests that there was an à priori design, set of skills, a culture in the baggage of the migrant, and that

[2] The term 'Turkish speaking people' indicates here that the participants in this research all had as their first spoken language Turkish, whether they were of Kurdish or Cypriot origin or citizenship. This tension is further explored and justified in the first chapter of the thesis.

acts of cooking, eating, moments of commensality will be mainly informed, if not governed, by what is inside this culinary baggage, even in cases where the mobility and malleability of these baggages are recognised. On the other hand, such denominations overstate a stability for culinary cultures, by making them appear, as with the case of UNESCO intangible heritage projects, a temporally and spatially fixed thing, as opposed to an occurring that takes its current form, which is also temporary, by means of mobility through forms and spatio-temporal affordances.

What I suggest in this thesis, what an encounter with the Turkish speaking communities revealed, is that À la Turca Foodscapes are London taskscapes first and foremost. The variety of the tasks accomplished and skills enacted are not transferred in the migrant's luggage, as a compact *à priori* design, knowledge or habitus that is enacted in a different location; but most skills are learnt in London and they are constantly in formation in response to changing dynamics. As will be explored further in the second chapter, the mobility of entrepreneurs, either between jobs or between culinary constellations they choose to serve, is one example among others. Similarly, having the evidence and confidence of claiming Kebab as British in reference to on-going activity in Britain, shows that the referential frameworks are not necessarily located elsewhere, but instead, by claiming the moment and the space, by acts of dwelling (*buan*), they are, they attend to one another, and they construct.

As discussed above, looking at migrant homes as being located in the country one was born and then left is at best reductive for understandings of what constitutes homes.

Abbots notes the significant role food plays in the social lives of diasporas, be it through "construction of discrete migrant subjectivities and group identities by both inclusion" or by "exclusion -in that others in the host region do not share migrant tastes" (2016, 115). Abbots' comment is important in recognising the "anchoring" function of food alongside its uses for distinction (Ibid.). In this research, I suggest an exploration of the anchoring function food has by looking at the ways in which it anchors 'migrants' to the city of their dwelling. I further aim to display how taskscapes instituted around food might also work to distinguish oneself from other migrants, making a statement about having already dwelled (See Chapter 1).

**Tactical Affirmations**

Recognising the potential of the creative and tactical engagements with everyday tasks (De Certeau (1984) 1988) goes hand in hand with the dwelling perspective's affirmation of life, not through identities, but by the power invested in the repetition of mundane tasks and their re-creative relation to dwelling. Going back to what I suggested earlier in the introduction, based on food's constant need for re-iteration, I furthermore suggest that doing things with food has epistemological, as well as political implications as it allows us to tactically engage with each other and the structures constantly; and in every reiteration and every modification, food calls for new ways of knowing ourselves and others, thus new ways of politically engaging.

Thinking of food as a taskscape has great potential in affirming the neighboring relationships, everyday negotiations that are taking place –clearly not without tension, against the rising neo-nationalist narratives' fear and hate politics. As nations had to be imagined, constructed out of pluralities, the neo-nationalist agenda is trying to re-imagine heterogeneities as divisive and dangerous, by creating invisibilities around the centuries long dwelling practices. It is the recognition of this very possibility of co-habitation that food tactically affirms; not as a potential or a possibility, but as something that has already happened.

We might also be living in a perfect historical moment to do things with food. Food may have never enjoyed such visibility, and may have never been the object of such concern be it for health reasons, its sustainability, ethical production and consumption and even as part of a celebrity culture where chefs are like the Hollywood stars of postwar era. The opportunity and the challenge therefore lies with the food researcher in deciphering an ordered reality in a moment of epistemological and populist concern with food, out of an abundant and chaotic reality. The way we choose to encounter food, know food constitute the tactical affirmative power of our taskscapes.

**Ordering Enmeshed Reality**

Each chapter of this thesis could have swollen to constitute a dissertation in its own right, each providing generous servings of thick description to convey the richness of the site under consideration. At the expense of having to postpone the development of certain discussions for further publications, and at times trimming the descriptions, the compromise in terms of depth of certain parts had an agenda of focusing on the meta-narrative that a patchwork of multiscape ethnography reveals.

The three foodscapes that are included within this thesis clearly do not constitute an exhaustive picture of food activities undertaken by the Turkish speaking community. The corner shops and speciality supermarkets owned and run by Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriots have been left out of the research for reasons of brevity. These sites that are all part and parcel of London foodscape, yet with internal dynamics that distinguish them from each other and active at different scales, display, in juxtaposition, the variety with which food related tasks and engagements can be acts of dwelling, hence home-making. The contradictions that emerge from such juxtapositions are especially valuable to point out the complexities of experiences of migrancy and homeliness, as well as the difficulty of generalising communitarian demands or attitudes for people who are assumed to share common ethnic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The inharmonious, fragmented and, at times, competing interests of the food players within a migrant *community*, let alone a city, is a simple yet puissant reminder of the fact that migrant as an identity category is not where the stories start, nor end and the color it adds to one's life story is in no way definitive or the main determinant, though, it makes a significant contribution to dwelling experience and strategies.

The first chapter aims at describing the terrain of the research marked by the difficulty of coming up with a term to delineate my participants even for the sake of brevity, given the ethnic and national heterogeneity of Turkish speaking people dwelling in London. Members of the Turkish speaking community mainly come from two different nation-states (Turkey and Cyprus), and are ethnically mixed (mainly Kurdish and Turkish).

Therefore, naming the Turkish speaking people living in London has further implications in terms of the analytical frameworks and theories that emerge from these, as inevitably they prioritise either nation-states or ethnicity as the lens through which to see the individuals. After listing the previous literature's engagement with various nominal categories, I explain my reasons for choosing the term "Turkish speaking" in reference to the encounters I had and as it refers to the activity, a deployment of skill, as opposed to an identity category. I furthermore discuss the methodologies required for tracing such mobile grounds, by means of the dynamism the field itself affords. The methodological concerns follow conceptualisations that show the limits of analytical frameworks when confronted with the complexity of everyday life.

In the second chapter, I explore the variety of repertoires of Turkish restaurants based on interviews with the managers and on participant observation in eating out establishments as customer, as waitress, as manager and as the supervisor of a drink company's promotional events. These restaurant repertoires include both the culinary heritages claimed as authentic, but also the expectations around abiding by a proper restaurant behavior, be it as a member of staff or as a customer. The consistency of the expected customer behavior, alongside the inconsistencies of the claims to authenticity, show that the managers of Turkish restaurants in London feel authoritative enough to diasporically proliferate means and meanings of what constitute authentic Turkish food. The practices of Turkish restaurants show that the minority ethnic business model no longer provides a satisfactory framework to understand how and what kind of culinary and professional repertoires are deployed.

In this chapter I also talk about the recent move of some entrepreneurs to other culinary repertoires, showing that both the entrepreneurial and culinary skills of the managers and chefs are learnt in situ and are transferrable and in-making, rather than being essentially fixed repertoires.

I then move, in the third chapter, to kebab, a dish maybe most overtly and popularly carrying the *stigma* of Turkishness. Despite a strong connection both with the everyday of the city and the makers as Turkish for the Londoners, and as Kurdish for the Turkish speaking community, the kebab is still bastardised, with the exception of the British Kebab Awards (BKA), where it becomes the cause of celebration. I discuss the organisation of the event and its function for various stakeholders, what kind of relational space it cherishes and then move to articulate what it means for BKA to claim kebab as British. Here I explore how a food–centered celebratory and sectoral event can stir re-imaginations of nation.

The fourth chapter focuses on the everyday food activities of individuals. Exploring how food eases some relations whilst hindering others, the household appears to be a permeable space where the dichotomy of private and public no longer hold true; where the technologies of communication make even the transnationality of households irrelevant and how concerns over healthy food, individual preferences and budget constraints appear to be more urgent priorities than performing a nostalgic home. Here, food becomes the task to be learnt in London, in reference to multiple locales, and the culinary luggage an active and never accomplished collections and events, as opposed to being an imported container of recipes that functions in reference to a place of birth.

Where ingredients and dishes are smuggled in the literal luggage, they are done so to carry a home-made quality that implies cleanliness and knowing what is inside, rather than bringing a material and edible piece of Turkey to London, where such tastes are longed for because they invoke Turkey. The transmission of culinary heritage to following generations is also far from being a straightforward relationship, and displays sensitivities around the transmission of general skills of feeding oneself rather than cooking in any specific way or dish that will sustain the livelihood of a culinary archive.

The food related activities of Turkish speaking people in London exceed what I focus in this thesis. These three main foodscapes are chosen for their visibility, but also in juxtaposition, they perform and make claims to what constitutes home in myriad ways. I therefore hope to contribute to the body of literature that shows that even when the migrants engage with co-ethnics, their assumed ethnic, culinary, national socio-cultural capitals are in constant modification. By means of ethnographic data on Turkish speaking people's activities vis-à-vis food but also with each other and with concepts of national-homes, I further aim at enlarging the scope of 'migrant' visibilities with an emphasis on their autonomy from even the states of migrancy. I therefore suggest the dwelling perspective, as opposed to migrancy as a fixed identity. It is only when we recognise the skillful agents in their taskscapes that I believe we will be able to sense what home is: a continuous and heterogeneous journey along spatio-temporal landscapes. The (social) bodies' dependency on food and its constant need of replenishment is where we display the greatest creativity. Looking through food therefore has great epistemological and political potential to move beyond the ethno-national lens perceiving cities and nations as containers of identities; instead as a taskscape of dwelling activities.

## Chapter One

### Setting and Navigating the Terroir

London as a foodscape offers the world on a plate, framing the capital as a global kitchen. As *Time Out* notes, the world is on a plate for the abundant possibilities of consuming food associated with ethnically or nationally demarcated cultures (Cook & Crang 1996). The possibility of sampling this global profusion is not limited to commercial eating out establishments. From supermarkets to corner shops, whether they are marked as speciality or world product, Polish or Turkish confectionaries, Mexican tortilla wraps, Oriental hot chilli sauces are at an arms' reach, with even variations based on one's budget when one chooses to bring the world to the domestic plate. As Emre, a 42 year old male from Istanbul enthuses, "I love being able to buy whatever sausage I want, with German saurkraut and British craft beer, then I make a Turkish shepherd salad, there you go, you have a cheap dinner with the world's stuff in just a few minutes." (Interview)

In London, the world is also represented in the kitchen in terms of workforce. From waiting staff to chefs, the restaurants' staff reflect the heterogeneity of the population of the city. Visitors to London find themselves in the capital of a resolutely monolingual nation yet are exposed to endless variations of a language occasioned by the accents and inflections of its non-native speakers.

Turkish food has an increasing visibility in the London foodscape, as a result not only of the growing number of eating out establishments run by Turkish speaking people since the 1990s, but also as a consequence of the greater demand for Turkish ingredients.

Up until the 1990s, the Turkish community living in South London would make weekly trips to the North of the capital in order to procure foodstuffs from the speciality shops selling Turkish, though nowadays such cross-city journeys are no longer required. Today, besides the Turkish Food Centre (TFC)[3] kind of chain supermarkets where a majority of the brands produced in Turkey are sold, it is not surprising to find a large variety of Turkish confectionary products, pastas, ready made soups, next to their Polish counterparts in a cornershop in many of the boroughs of London. Turkish food's presence outside of the situations directly enacted by Turkish, Kurdish or Cypriot people show that Turkish food is taking its place as part of the symbolic foodscape of London, if not the UK.

The availabilities of speciality shops, ethnically marked restaurants and the World Food sections in the supermarkets give a general idea of the phenomenon of tourism being practiced not only in person but in a surrogate sense, by palate. Food marked with Turkish and/or pre-republican Ottoman culinary heritage appears in various forms and in places where there are no Turkish agents or entrepreuneurs (Giraffe menu) or Waitrose magazine med issue; and Turkish entrepreuneurs, chefs, waiters and waitresses prepare, cook, serve food that is either associated with the culinary associations of another country such as pizzas or Mexican food, or run more neutral eating out establishments, mostly in the form of cafés where no ethnic or national culinary heritage is singled out but dishes such as Spanish Omelette, Turkish Menemen –a breakfast dish made with scrambled eggs over onions and green peppers-, and English Breakfast are joined as part of the repertoire.

[3] http://tfcsupermarket.com

In what follows, I will describe the vaguely defined Turkish speaking population and then move on to how I navigated the ground suggested by their presence.

**Turkish Speaking Community to *à La Turca***

The term Turkish Speaking Community, in everyday use among Londoners and official documents (HAC 2011), refers to the conglomeration of three groups; Turkish from Turkey, Kurdish from Turkey and Turkish-Cypriots from Cyprus. In the following section, I will describe the main features of this population, the academic terminologies with which they are qualified and the problems that arise with each of these terminologies in light of the previous ethnographic work. Finally, the choice of this cluster as opposed to others will be justified within the purposes of this research.

There is no clear estimate about the population that constitute the Turkish Speaking Community. According to the Centre for Turkey Studies there are about 400,000 members of the Turkish Speaking Community, while the number is stated as low as 250,000 in Atay's ethnography in early 2000s (2006 27). Stevens *et. al.* already suggest a population of 340,000-360,000 in their research dated 2002 and note that 40,000 among already rather mobile population "are without permanent accommodation and defined as transient" (44).

The Home Affairs Committee suggests 500,000 from Turkish origin living in the UK out of which 150,000 are Turkish nationals, though this does not mention whether they are from Kurdish origin or not (HAC 2011, p.38).

Half or more of this number are thought to be Cypriots. D'Angelo *et. al*., citing their source as UK Census 2011 data, indicate that there are about 91,115 Turkish-born people in England and Wales, out of which 59,596 live in London (10, 15).

These numbers exclude both the Cypriots and Turkish born in UK. Among this London population, 71.7% state Turkish as their main spoken language and 31.6% identify as primarily Kurdish speakers. These numbers are further questionable as there is a substantial student population in London from Turkey and Cyprus and the student and resident populations are not clearly demarcated. The studentships, lasting from a few months in language schools to a few years in graduate studies, and the mobility with which the students shift between categories of visa make it difficult to even have a yearly estimate of the exact number of arrivals and stays. According to Ataman, there are about 10,000 Turkish speaking students arriving to the UK every year, 10% of which are coming for graduate studies and most of them settle in London (Ataman 2012 60-61). There are also those who arrive to take up temporary posts with transnational companies for limited periods of time. Like students, some of them decide to stay for an extra couple of years after the end of their initially planned term, or even decide to settle permanently. D'Angelo notes that majority of the Turkish-born people arriving after the 1990s acquired British citizenship and those who do not have the citizenship remain in the country by means of family, study or work visas, while there is a decrease in the number of stays by means of seeking asylum compared to previous decades (7). D'Angelo also notes that "'Turkish' and 'Kurdish' are not among the standard ethnic categories used in most official statistics, including the Census.

However, the Census questionnaire allowed respondents to tick a box to indicate 'other' ethnic groups and to write down their self-ascribed ethnic identity" (p.8). Hence, Turkish and Kurdish appear as self-ascribed "ethnicities". The volatility of numbers hence stems from the mobility of the population both between countries and within London, the variety of the legal statuses, and the variability of self-identifications stated in questionnaires. The Turkish speaking community resists quantifiability mainly because it is a aggregation of a group that does not clearly fit into a single ethnicity, national "home" country or singular visa category, the main categories that inform the conventions of counting people. The Turkish speaking population in its variety and escape from the area of visibility defined by such counting tools further exacerbates the challenges of clustering populations by their status of migrancy.

A similar difficulty in demarcating what constitutes Turkish, from Turkey or part of the Turkish speaking community, haunts the scholarly works across disciplines that respond to the challenge by using different clusters and terminologies in their qualifications. "Turkish migrants in UK" refers at times to a vague group, without any specification of ethnicity or country of origin (Daglar *et al*.). In their report "Welfare needs of Turkish and Kurdish Communities in London" D'Alessio *et. al.* focus on "the Turkish-speaking people living in North London". While they discuss the distinction between the self-declared ethnicities of Turkish and Kurdish (p.8), they do not clarify to what extent their sample include Cypriots. They cite the Greater London Authority Report "Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot Communities in London" dated 2009 (p.9) and UK Census 2011 demographic data (p.19) clearly distinguishing between Turkish Cypriots and Turkish; however there is no reference to the Cypriots in their

analysis. As such, their use of 'Turkish' alternates between denoting ethnicity (Turkish as in not Kurdish) and denoting country of origin (from Turkey) to the possible exclusion of Cypriots from the Turkish communities. Stevens *et. al*., in a similar fashion, alternate between "Turkish speaking people", "Turkish people" and "people of Turkish origin", without any clear indication as to whether they refer to ethnicity to the exclusion of Kurdish, or to citizenship or country of origin, to the exclusion of Cypriots. Similarly, Goodyer *et. al.* recruit "people whose first language is Turkish" (108) in the Camden and Tower Hamlet areas of London for their research on the access to medicines information in UK among "*Turkish people* with poor English" [emphasis added]. In such situations where the first language is taken as the criteria to denote Turkishness, the nomination by-passes the differences among the ethnicities of Turkish and Kurdish, the countries of origin (Turkey or Cyprus) and rather refers to a shared everyday life commonality, in this case difficulty of accessing information about the use of particular medicines due to lack of sufficient linguistic skills in English.

**Difficulty of naming for analytical purposes**

Such inevitable agglomeration of terminologies within a single research creates confusion in terms of the constituency of the samples, at times blurring analytical boundaries. They are, at the same time, emblematic of the difficulty of framing especially migrant communities in their country of arrival based on ethnicity or national identity, as these are themselves imagined and mobile nominations. In the case of the Turkish speaking communities in UK, being from Turkey or having a Turkish passport can be a common denominator for both ethnic Turkish

and Kurdish, while being ethnically Turkish is assumed to be a common denominator between the Turkish and Turkish-Cypriots. The Kurds are part of networks that extend beyond the Turkish-speaking community while Turkish-Cypriots are part of larger Cypriot networks to the inclusion of Greek-Cypriot populations. "From Turkey" excludes or at least renders invisible Turkish-Cypriots, as well as "Turkish" when deployed as being from mainland Turkey. "Turkish" as an ethnic category brings in Turkish-Cypriots to the exclusion of people who might self-identify as ethnically Kurdish. None of these alternatives accounts for the variety of legal statuses of the members of the TSC in UK. There is a mixture of self-sponsored work permit holders, sponsor-dependent visas, student Tier 4 visas, and those who gained or are in the process of gaining indefinite leave to remain or citizenship through the Ankara Agreement[4], as political asylum seekers or as partners of UK citizenship holders. As vague as it sounds "Turkish-speaking" denotes a loosely formed group whose members share networks, institutions and experiences, based on the shared linguistic practice in everyday life if not as their first language. It is a qualification that institutes itself in the everyday practice of Turkish language among others, and not in an assigned nationality category and/or ethnicity.

[4] The agreement signed between Turkey and European Economic Community was seen as a preparatory step for Turkish accession to EU, regulating free circulation of workers, establishments and services. The agreement allows for Turkish citizens to gain access to permanent residency, if they are able to secure jobs and/or prove that the business they established is effectively running, in successive periods of three, four and five years (Republic of Turkey, Ministry of EU Affairs http://www.abgs.gov.tr/index.php?p=117&l=2).

**Waves of Arrival**

The members of the Turkish speaking communities each have their own story of arrival, whether it is fueled by educational, economic or political reasons. It is not uncommon to hear stories of people who happened to remain in the UK following a study or temporary work situation, almost by accident, even though they did not initially dream of coming specifically to the UK. The individual stories, motivations and periods of arrival depend on the class, political struggles and opportunities sought by each member. Here, I would like to note the general waves of arrival for respective communities of Turkish-Cypriots, Turkish and Kurdish members.

Issa notes that these "first immigrants from Cyprus were mostly young men of Greek origin arriving as British subjects when Cyprus was a crown colony" and they were mostly single men, students, seamen or merchants seeking a better life (Issa 2008, p.154). Following "migration trajectories" of the Greek-Cypriots, Lytra *et. al.* include the first Turkish-Cypriot arrivals within this pre-World War I wave (2008, p.22). The inter-communal violence in the 1950s and 1960s on the island caused the second and major migration wave, conventionally periodized as Post World War II migration (1945-1974). The third period starts after the 1974 war and the Turkish occupation of Cyprus. The division of the island into Northern Turkish and Southern Greek parts and the population exchange caused both Greek Cypriots who lost their homes and Turkish Cypriots to seek a new life in the UK. The arrivals from the islands are estimated to be around 40,000-50,000 in the immediate aftermath of the 1974 war (Robins and Aksoy 2001 689).

By the 1990s, economic hardship became the main motivation for leaving the island (Issa 2008, p.155). Cypriots, especially after joining the EU in 2004, diversified their migratory trajectories to include other European countries.

Turkish-Cypriots are thought to be the first members of the Turkish speaking community to arrive in the UK. Turkish and Kurdish arrivals from mainland Turkey do not start until 1970s. They are rather "an extension of the wider migration to Europe" in need of a workforce from other countries, as noted by Issa (2008, p.155). The Turkish and Kurdish arrive as a labor population initially. Arrivals with study purposes are much less common, asylum seekers almost inexistent. Their families then join this mostly male population in late 1970s and 1980s. The textile industry is the first income source for these workers and their families. When the textile industry suffered a downturn due to unfavourable economic conditions in the 1990s, most of the then displaced Turkish labour entered the catering sector. Even though the workers from Turkey are entitled to apply for residency permit after five years of legal residence in UK, Issa notes that many preferred to retain their Turkish nationality and rather opted for a yearly renewable work permit, as the Turkish government, until recently, did not allow one to inherit or own property in Turkey if de-nationalized (2008, p.155-156). With the change of that legislation in Turkey and increasing knowledge about the Ankara Agreement[5] after the 1990s, more and more members of the Turkish speaking community have applied for permanent residency or citizenship.

[5] The information does not seem to be very well circulated among Turkish speaking communities in other Europen countries. In UK, it is one of the most known ways of securing residency. Even those who opt for other ways know about it. The increasing visibility is partially ensured by law firm advertisements in Turkish speaking community newspapers such as *Olay*.

Turkish-speaking Kurds or Kurdish from Turkey arrive mainly after the 1980s for political and economic reasons. The war in the South East region of Turkey among the separatists and Turkish army rendered the mostly Kurdish populated area hostile for simple everyday activities, not to mention any means of subsistence. Issa notes that by the late 1980s Sunni fundamentalists' persecution of the Kurdish in Alevi dominated areas became another push factor (Issa 2008, p.156). Despite its complications, seeking political asylum becomes another strategy for settlement during this period (Ibid. p.156-157).

As seen above, the Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot-Turkish come to the UK in different periods and with different motives. Their means of securing legal residency also show variations. In the following section, drawing on Ataman's criticism of cosmopolitanism and cluster of Turkish-speaking community as opposed to Turkish migrants, I will elaborate on the implications of various terminologies and explain in which terms we can still speak of Turkish speaking community in reference to these various communities.

### ***Turkish*** **migrants vs.** ***Turkish-Speaking*** **Migrants**

A major critique of the use of Turkish speaking communities to cluster groups that have distinct stories of arrival and settlement to UK, comes from Bora Ataman, in his ethnographic work on Turkish people in London, *Cosmopolitan Lives, Diasporic Identities* (2012). Ataman argues that the term Turkish speaking communities provides an homogenizing lens and is guilty of withering away the ideological differences and discrepant settlement stories of individual members from the discussions of belonging (25).

He states that “diasporic communities”, composed of “individuals whose spatial ties with their place of origin are ripped or weakened, due to various political, economic, social and cultural reasons […] are more prone to fluid, multiple, decentralized identity formations than any other group” (92). He furthermore accepts that the site of his ethnography, London, as an example of Western metropole with multiple diasporic populations, provides a cosmopolite living space, composed of groups and individuals with transnational ties and multiple belongings (Ataman, 2012, 93).

Ataman, however, thinks that even in the age of globalized fluid identities and the particular London city-scape, the cosmopolitan nature of the Turkish speaking community is overemphasized. He qualifies Robins and Aksoy’s findings that the members of the Turkish speaking community do not accept Britishness or Turkishness as their natural and initial frame of reference within the transnational environment they live in (Robins and Aksoy, 2005, 26-31) as an “imagined cosmopolitanism” (Ataman, 97). He believes that a bias occurs in favour of cosmopolitanism as Robins and Aksoy base their research on the transnational use and consumption of media without balancing their analysis with reference to “real economic, political, social and cultural choices” and the ideological perspectives of the Turkish speaking migrants. According to him, the regulating forces of nation-states, especially in the form of responses developed to a fear of neo-liberal global attack are still active and contribute greatly to the construction of identities today (ideological, ethnic, etc.) (Ataman 2012, 26-32).

Ataman's disavowal of the Turkish speaking community is partially guided by a desire to remind one of the complexities of identity constructions and mainly informed by cases where culture is conflated with nation-state and national identity, and serve as life-guiding principles. His insistence on "Turkish migrants" as opposed to Turkish speaking community, has the agenda of establishing a hierarchy between national belongings and transnational ones, prioritising having been born in Turkey as the overarching life-principle. The multiplicity of belongings, the complex networks and the cosmopolite living spaces are not seen as the cracks of a nationalistic thinking, but as always coming secondary to it.

Such a conclusion stems from Ataman's strong ideological opposition to cosmopolitanism, as well as from his methodology in recruiting research participants and fails to provide a justification for renouncing TSC as an analytical category. The way Ataman recruits the participants to his two part research is already biased in favor of individuals who are holding tightly to their national frameworks. His first group of informants, Turkish MA students, are recruited among the Turkish Clubs of three London universities (p.64) and the second group of informants are recruited among a sub-group of politically mobilized Turkish Nationalists, the Socialist Front, who see themselves as "the guardians of secularism and national sovereignty against imperialism" (p.107). The first group of students, qualified as pre-migrants by Ataman with an amendment of Hiller and Franz's concept of pre-migrancy (Hiller and Franz, 2004), are composed of individuals who came to the UK in pursuit of opportunities in line with their talents and cultural capital as opposed to economic difficulties or political asylum.

Ataman qualifies them as an advantaged group who have access to tools to inform themselves thanks to their cultural capital and do not feel in a hurry to decide about where to live next. They are further compared to a nomadic group in pursuit of nutrition, but one that is of a socio-cultural nature (Ataman 2012, p.58-9). Even though Ataman calls them a pre-migrant group, the recruited informants, at the time of the research, are still indecisive about whether to stay in the UK or not. They are temporary Londoners, with student visas, and yet are not clear whether to pursue further education or job opportunities either in the UK, in Turkey or elsewhere. As such, it is not clear whether they see themselves in a permanent settlement position in the present or in the future in the UK. Furthermore, they are recruited from the Turkish clubs in their respective universities, hence already being among a group who sees national identity as a priority. The interviews that Ataman shares also show a strong national pride and a strong sense of belonging to Turkey.

The second group of informants are chosen among members who overtly mobilized themselves as Turkish Nationalist (*Ulusalcı*). Ataman categorises the manifestations of the nationalist political mobilisation in London into four groups: far right ethnic nationalists, ethnic nationalists who pursue a synthesis between Islamism and Turkishness, secular nationalists who are positioned on the centre-left, and the socialist, anti-emperialist far-left nationalist groups (p.107). These groups take as their main reference point Turkish nationalism, thus a constant reference to politics as they relate to Turkish is circularly expected. The majority of the chosen interviewees arrived to the UK as political refugees and are living in London for over twenty years (p.108).

They do not agree with the current states of politics in Turkey or in the world, and mobilize themselves against imperialism, while holding tightly to a national identity with secular promises. The group is composed of ethnic Kurds who see their national identity as Turkish, Turkish Cyrpriots who clearly see the Turkish part of Cyprus as belonging to Turkish national borders, and some informants who lived in the big cities such as Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir (p.110). Most informants live in the Green Lanes area of London where they rarely need to speak in English even though they speak enough English to communicate for everyday needs (p.115). They are modernist and follow the secular Western values alongside their cultural practices (p.114-115). According to Ataman, his informants are "ideologically connected to their Turkishness, rather than culturally and ethnically" (p.114) and it is possible to argue that "their everyday life choices are more hybrid than their perceived identities" and yet he insists that this hybridity cannot be read as a combined British-Turkish identity (p.115) and argues that his ethnography challenges the theoretical impositions of cosmopolitanism on Turkish migrants, as done by previous research on media consumption, specifically by Robins and Aksoy (2005).

The bias occurs in Ataman's research not because his analysis is not representative of the groups he interviews, but because, in a circular movement, he selects his informants among the already nationalistic groups and reaches a general conclusion that a sense of national belonging -as opposed to cosmopolitanism- frames the livelihood among 'Turkish migrants'. As he admits, he sees Turkish'ness as an ideological national belonging, respectful of the Turkish national borders and state, independent of one's country of origin (as in Turkey or Cyprus) or ethnicity (Kurdish of Turkish).

Both his recruitment strategy and his analysis suffers from "methodological nationalism". Glick Schiller and Çağlar note:

> Methodological nationalism is an orientation that approaches the study of social and historical processes as if they were contained within the borders of individual nation-states. Nation-states are conflated with societies. The term 'methodological nationalism' emphasizes the political implications of the container notion of society. The very problematic of migration studies is shaped with by the conflation of the nation-state with society. […] Because the nation-state is equated with society for methodological nationalists, the social fabric and the integrity of social institutions and the cultural norms that support them are seen as contained within state borders.
>
> (2011, p. 64)

Glick Schiller and Çağlar argue that such perceptions pave the way for depictions such as "host country" where the arrival of the "foreigners" create tension with the "natives", both groups perceived as having "particular distinctive common national norms" (p.64). Ataman pays lip service to the abundance of literature on transnational identities and belongings. However, the national identity of Turkish'ness is such a strong framework that he can only use the terminology "Turkish migrant", as opposed to "Turkish speaking".

For him, everyday experiences' exceeding features of identity frameworks do not constitute the incoherencies of imagining diverse groups as part of a nation, as long as the informants express a loyalty to Turkey's national identity. Hence, instead of taking the evidence of *cosmopolitan lives,* as it appears in the title of his book, as a challenge to the categorization Turkish migrant, he insists on diasporic identities, based on a group that is already recruited for their functioning within a national framework. His rejection of cosmopolitanism in favor of Turkish nationalism, creates a dichotomous tension, between feeling Turkish and being in the "host land" UK (p.44) while practices of members of Turkish speaking community and their belongings and identity formations exceed this binary (Atay 2006, Issa 2008, Robins and Aksoy 2001, 2003, 2005, Şimşek 2016).

Robins and Aksoy's research enables us to think beyond the dichotomy of here and there, Turkey and the UK, and shows that in practical terms, belongings operate within the cosmopolitan stage of London and are negotiated on an everyday basis, at times not needing the reference points suggested by the nations of either Turkey or the UK (2003, 2005). As argued elsewhere by Robins and Aksoy in the specific example of Turkish-Cypriots in Britain, an operational space between the British, Cypriot and Turkish national reference points is possible and such an approach enables one to move away from stabilizing, assigned identities to "thinking about experiences" (2001). While Ataman's attempt to discuss identity in an hierarchy of national vs. cosmopolitan cannot be generalized to the entirety of Turkish Speaking Community, Robins and Aksoy's discussion of "experience" loosens the conundrum of the binary in favor of the inclusion of a transnational experience sphere shared by all members of TSC.

Based on the transnational media consumption and the narratives around this media consumption, Robins and Aksoy focus on the "experience" and the meanings created, "enlarged" around these experiences, to claim that national identities do not anymore provide an initial reference framework for Turkish speaking communities, or for studies about these. Robins and Aksoy argue that there is an increasing "transnational sensibility" and a demand for "transnational connectivity" among the Turkish-speaking communities of London (2003, p. 367-383), moving their "thinking beyond the frame of national society and beyond the agenda according to which 'minority' affairs have hitherto been conducted, that is, beyond the logic of social integration" (p.384). Their focus is on the "transnational retellings" "where we might find more complex perspectives, ones that might serve to extend and diversify cultural repertoires" (p.375).

Focusing on the experiential sphere allow us to look at shared networks and communities among groups that do not fit under the nationally assigned citizenship and/or ethnic clusters. Turkish and Kurdish from Turkey and Turkish-Cypriots, in the constitution of their livelihood in the UK, share neighborhoods (Issa 2008, D'Angelo et.al 2013), complementary schools (Issa 2008, Lytra *et. al.* 2008), businesses and trivial details of everyday (Atay 2006). Despite the tensions that might arise, especially in discussions about Turkish involvement in Cyprus changing the whole layout of the island, and/or Kurdish nationalist movement, sharing similar world views allow them to co-exist within the same politically mobilized associations or parties (Ataman 2012).

Sensing this livelihood not only in between but in excess of categories calls upon a gesture beyond the frame of "Turkish migrant", carrying a strong alliance to either ethnicity or nation-state of Turkey, towards "Turkish speaking", with an emphasis on experience of shared language providing the ground for network formation.

**Turkish speaking *community* or Turkish *Migrant* do not Exist**

Research at hand attempts to provide further account of the experiential sphere shared by members of the Turkish speaking community. In the particular example of foodscapes they create, the members of the community seem to share collective places both in running their businesses and in the places they eat or enjoy their leisure time (Atay 2006). Besides their import/export and retail activities, in the restaurants they run, they display transnational engagement within the specific locality of London. In fine-dine restaurants, they pragmatically modify the menus or the ingredients to suit the palate of their international audience. They exceed the national culinary traditions and rather deploy exoticized or touristicized versions of regional aesthetics and tastes, as a functioning of global markets. The focus of this research is mainly the performances of home, through these foodscapes as enacted by individuals who are part of the Turkish Speaking Community, among their other belongings. The attempt is to recollect everyday acts and reiterations of home(s) in the multiple forms it is/they are interpellated (home country, space of dwelling, city of livelihood, citizenship status, etc.). The transnational mode that pragmatically structures the foodscapes, is also constitutive of performances of home.

The regional belongings, parts of imagined communities that respect or not the recognized nation-states, belongings and tables shared with those who do not fit into easy group affiliation models will be the flesh of this research based on the participants accounts. As such it attempts to go beyond the host country and home country dichotomy, ethnically defined separations; and rather aims at witnessing the various constitutions of home, within this shared space.

Available terminologies fall yet short of grasping the intricacies of *à la turca* foodscapes in London. "Turkish speaking community" does not provide a spotless solution either. The word "community" resonates a more or less coherent whole, a forcing together of individual stories that I hope to encounter by providing the participants' accounts within the differential whole they make. Its closest alternative, Turkish speaking *migrant,* seems not to be popular among many members of the community. One year long observation in Turkish restaurants and informal conversations with the members of Turkish Speaking Community while presenting the earlier title of my research "Turkish Speaking Migrants' Homes", showed that the migrancy is perceived as a pejorative term, denoting a helpless start point, and a struggle in settlement. Few students I interviewed arrived in the UK for temporary stay, at least initially, with no clear prospect of permanently settling. Migrant, for them implies people who arrived in the UK with clear intentions of staying, either for political or economic reasons. They don't see themselves as migrants. A restaurant owner who has been living in the UK for over ten years, in West London (male, late 30s), tells me to go to North London, and adds that this is where the migrants are, referring to early working class arrivals.

The chef of the same restaurant (male, 40s, arrived to UK in 1980s as a political refugee), living in the UK for over twenty years, jokingly responds to my earlier research title: "Where are the migrants? Show me the migrants. This is home now." Migrancy is perceived as a state of the past for many members of the Turkish speaking community, marked by a lack of adaptation. The attitude furthermore seems to be an act of distinguishing themselves (within the context of their fine-dine restaurant) from the "ignorant, unable to adapt to local conditions, nationalistic Turkish people coming from the villages" (Interview). Their presence in London is unquestionably non-migrant in their eyes, because they are doing quite well economically and socially, and have no prospect of returning.

Mainly for the resistance the word migrant faces but also for lack of a better alternative, I will use the terminology Turkish Speaking Community as an encompassing start point, to denote Turkish, Kurdish from Turkey, Turkish-Cypriots, Turkish and Kurdish coming from other EU countries (Lytra, et al. 21). The recent increase in the number of mixed marriages between members of Turkish speaking community and non-TSC also suggest the need to include a group of "Turkish-language-curious" partners or spouses who might be of British or non-British origin, with various ethnic, religious and national affiliations. They follow courses on Turkish language (Yunus Emre Cultural Centre, Interview, 13.12.2013), participate in the activities of the associations their partners are affiliated with and are part of the networks that their partners constitute.

More importantly, they are part of home-making practices with members of the Turkish speaking community, hence will be included as participants for the purposes of this research. Based on the accounts of the informants, "community" will be differentiated and "the" community will be questioned. Hopefully, by re-telling stories that are so ungraspable within the reach of existing terminologies, the excesses they enact will be a fruitful academic exercise that will inform future categorizations.

**The Ambivalence vis-à-vis the Food Sector**

Turkish and Kurdish involvement with the catering sector is London is such that one would struggle to find an individual from this group neither directly or indirectly deriving their livelihood from the distribution, preparation or serving of food.

The mixed reactions I received while doing my research showed the mixed feelings that govern the associations with the catering sector. On the one hand, it was not surprising that research was being undertaken on Turkish restaurants, it made sense, food was seen as the main sector of activity for Turkish and Kurdish. On the other, there were sighs when I told about my thesis: "We do much more than food" (Onder).

This ambivalence is partially due to the pride acquired as entrepreneurs of a successful sector, but on the other it hides the displaced if not replaced professional aspirations of those who came to London with hopes of being able to practice their profession, a job for which they had been trained.

The ambivalence shifts in favour of rejection especially for the second generation: the parents' successful business is perceived as a limit to one's options rather than being perceived as a source of guarantee or opportunity in a highly competitive job market. In cases where they take up the family business, a certain differentiation from the paternal models is quick to come up in conversations. Murat, the son of a chef, buys a French café, as he sees this is the only way to gain his autonomy and authorial voice. In other cases, branches of the same restaurant chain are delegated to sons, who gain a relatively independent space of activity, territorially, practically and symbolically carving spaces away from their fathers legacy (Efes restaurants and Efes Express).

The ambivalence or rejection of an easy association with what you cook is an important facet of the restaurants or eat out places that do not necessarily cash in on the exoticism that accompanies selling Turkish food, but that operate in a space of availabilities of different culinary repertoires, where Spanish omelettes are as much a part of the breakfast repertoire as Eggs Benedicts and full English breakfasts (Tufnell Park cafe).

**Foodscapes à la Turca**

The difficulty of coming up with analytical framings in itself showed the limits of the language, theoretical paradigms and the everyday experience. The thesis was initially framed as an enquiry regarding Turkish migrants, and yet the research revealed there are no Turkish migrants in London. The question is whether migrancy's refusal by the migrants is meaningful, an act of dwelling, or whether the term migrant does not anymore satisfy or reflect the lived experiences and self-definitions of the people who are assigned migrancy? That challenge of naming, normative determinism, haunted the thesis from mid fieldwork to the end of the writing process. It is hoped that it will be illuminating for us, researchers interested in the transnationally mobile people's stories and livelihoods, that this challenge is one that still awaits being resolved.

In this research, despite its limitations, I will be referring to my participants as Turkish Speaking. In *–ing* form, I hope this denotation, its ongoing realization, at least remains truthful to the frame of mind of the larger thesis, reiterating the idea that one is what one makes and how she makes it, as opposed to adhering strictly to the assigned-at-birth nationality or gained citizenship status, as neither is fully competent to explain human stories that are always in becoming. Accepting the fact that this nomination for referential purposes do not make justice to self-identification or social occasion that mark the everyday of the individuals, I hope to at least stir imaginations where life's experience does not fit the containers of knowledge making and noting.

Foodscapes are à la Turca, tinted with Turkish culinary heritage, are built in response to the demands and movements in the UK, more specifically London, and because in cases I looked at, even when enacted by Kurdish or Cypriot members, they referred to a vague sense of Turkey's culinary and otherwise symbolism, rather than an ethnic one. Such blurring of ethnic identity was hence both a choice, to refrain from re-iterating sense-making activities in reference to such groupings, but also an outcome, a consequence of the terroir of research.

**Navigating the Terroir**

Ingold, in his essay "Footprints through the weather-world: walking, breathing, knowing" explores the relationship between "becoming knowledgeable, walking along, and the experience of weather" (2010, p.S121). According to Ingold, "Far from being uniform, homogenuous, and prepared, the ground is variegated, composite, and undergoes continuous generation. Moreover, it is apprehended in movement rather than from fixed points. Making their way along the ground, people create paths and tracks" (Ibid.). The ground of foodscapes is similar, marked by continuous movement and flexibility, where the individual agency of the groups associated with the performance of a particular culinary tradition mixes with the local site's dynamics.

Methods of accessing knowledge, ways in which one chooses to navigate a ground is an integral part of the knowledge that will come out of that field. As shown earlier in this chapter, the challenges of nominating actors in a particular field to their selections as participants to a research project has consequences for the conceptualisations, theories and imaginations that will haunt the people spoken of and for. Methodology is complicit in temporary narratives of academic knowledge as well as its blind spots.

The terrain of food is particularly difficult to navigate for it is entangled in a multiplicity of social phenomena. A concern with food means a concern with what is everywhere and at all times, be it in material or symbolic forms. There lies the first and foremost challenge of the food researcher: to frame analytically the ubiquity, to uncover the unseen in the most seen. In this research, by means of performative ethnography I looked at the taskcapes that were created around food, which in turn come to perform home at different registers. Just as the taskcapes were created so too was the methodology that sought to capture their appearances and turns, navigating through spaces and circumstances that broached public and private, commercial and domestic.

**Food and Home as Performance**

> Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations of representations: once it does, it becomes something other than performance. To the degree that performance attempts to enter the economy of reproduction it betrays and lessens the promise of its own ontology. Performance's being...becomes itself through disappearance. (Phelan 1993, p. 146)

To borrow Ingold's phrasing, if the ground of knowing is "infinitely variegated, composite, and undergoes continuous generation" (Ingold 2010, p.S134), how does one comes to get to know it? What kind of methodology can respond to the dynamism of such field? What are "the technologies for enacting finitude in the face of constant change"?[6] Is it possible to register the "undocumentable moment of performance"?

**Semi-structured interviews to go-alongs**

Interviews, alongside participant observation, have been one of the main tools of ethnographic information gathering. Composed of a verbal exchange between the researcher and a specific participant or a focus group composed of various participants, they are classified in three structural models depending on the levels of flexibility they allow: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviewing (I.e. Oral histories). (Dunn 2005, p.79).

[6] Dan Hicks, in his review of Tim Ingold's essay "The Temporality of the Landscape" refers to archaeology and anthropology as the technologies of finitude for these disciplines and their respective knowledge formations "try to make provisional stoppages of time and place" (Hicks 2016, p.15). Here, I refer to the methods used in this research to navigate the terrain.

Dunn defines the continuum as follows:

> Structured interviews follow a predetermined and standardized list of questions. The questions are always asked in almost the same way and in the same order. At the other end of the continuum are unstructured forms of interviewing such as oral histories […] The conversation in these interviews is actually directed by the informant rather than by the set questions. In the middle of this continuum are semi-structured interviews. This form of interviewing has some degree of predetermined order but still ensures flexibility in the way issues are addressed by the informant.
>
> (Dunn 2005, p. 80)

Following Dunn's continuum, the majority of the meetings with the participants have been initially designed as semi-structured interviews, informal and conversational in tone. However these were not enough to understand taskscapes in making.

As Margarethe Kusenbach reminds us, "sit-down interviews usually keeps informants from engaging in 'natural' activities, typically taking them out of the environments where those activities take place" (2003, p.459). As such, a great deal of information that might have triggered by the visual clues, objects that are related to a particular activity or the site where an activity takes place, is lost. Sit-down interviews are also "static encounters" where talking is privileged at the exclusion of any other activity as distraction.

Hence, context-sensitive reactions that the participants may display or narrate otherwise, do not easily come up in the interviews (p.462). In order not to "miss out on those themes that do not lend themselves to narrative accounting, such as pre-reflective knowledge and practices of the body, or the most trivial details of day-to-day environmental experience", Kusenbach suggests "a more systematic and outcome-oriented version of hanging out" method: go-along (p.463).

Deployed for observing "the spatial practices of the participants *in situ* while accessing their experiences and interpretations at the same time", Kusenbach defines go-alongs as accompanying individual participants "on their 'natural' outings". Combined with questions, acts of listening and observing, go-alongs allow the researcher to "actively explore the participants' [their subjects'] stream of experiences and practices as they move through, interact with, their physical and social environment" (p.463).

The go-along method is particularly useful for unveiling the tactical uses of neighborhood and city spaces as foodscapes in their everyday enactment, while looking at the variety of the participants' home performances. To this end, the go-along method was used at the first instance, as shop-along. The participants were accompanied during one or more of their food shopping activities. The kinds and proximity of the shops chosen, the participants' interaction with their neighbors and shop owners were observed. The participants were asked about their criteria for shopping at particular shops and choice of particular products as well as their arrival in the neighborhood, their settlement stories and their perceived familiarity with the space and the people.

Through the trivial details of the everyday acts of shopping were revealed priorities around the acts of shopping based on available resources, and also strategies of deployment of neighborhood and city spaces for sourcing food.

The second go-along method was hoping to take the form of eat-out-along. The participants were going to be followed to a restaurant of their own choosing. They were going to be asked about their eating out preferences: the culinary traditions they prefer, the regularity and purpose of their eating out, and their preferred restaurants/eat-out places. The co-presence of the participant and the researcher *in situ* of the restaurant/eating out place was going to provide a chance of observing the instant reactions to the aesthetic and culinary setting, the tablescapes. Similarly it would be a convenient place to initiate conversations about the participants' perceptions of and expectations from Turkish restaurants. This part of the research has not been possible to do, as the time spent in the households was already time and labor intensive.

The domestic sphere is organized and used tactically for purposes of storing, preparing, cooking and eating food. What comes in the house, - and does not - is informed by regional, and other affiliations as well as personal tastes. The intricacies of the refrigerators, kitchens and tablescapes, best exposed themselves in the acts of cooking together. During these cook-alongs, the spatial organization of the houses contributed or hindered exchanges between the researcher and the participants. In one case, the relative privacy the kitchen space allowed us to 'gossip' about her husband's claim to be a modern husband but refusal to take parts in the acts of cooking and shopping when the need arose.

The participants were also asked about their cooking habits, the division of labor in the household about cooking, their typical meals and their tablescapes.

Cook-along proved to be a challenging part of the research as it required extended periods of stays in households, meaning a use of the household's edible and spatio-temporal resources. Though always welcomed with great hospitality, I had to constantly reflect on the balance between accepting offerings of resources and not overstaying my welcome. It was also demanding on my body, as I had to push limits of my available skills as well as dietary preferences.

**Methodology for Restaurants**

I conducted participant observations in over 60 Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriots run establishments serving food. I also worked at a Kurdish-run cafe and worked as a PR manager at another Turkish restaurant, giving a deeper sense of relationalities of the field. Among the 60 I visited, there is one British Pub serving Thai food, one British cafe with some items inspired by Turkish cuisine, one British pub serving Mediterranean food and one Italian restaurant. Besides the numerous informal conversations with the serving staff and chefs, I conducted sixteen semi-structured interviews, the majority of them with managers and owners. All interviewees agreed to have the meetings recorded, which I then transcribed. The production of menus, supply of ingredients, decoration, service priorities, clientele, staff choices and reasons for establishing such business were the focus of both observations and the questions. I also held meetings with the owner of a Turkish wholesale company supplying to catering business, the organizers of the British Kebab Awards and one editor at the weekly Turkish Newspaper *Olay*, in order to get a larger sense of the field and to obtain contacts.

I went to the majority of the eating out places more than once to get a varied sense of timing, clientele, staff and the changing uses of the spaces. I also visited them, where possible, during special activities such as belly dancing shows or soccer games. I scheduled interviews with the managers, mostly after an initial visit to the space. Two key informants and referrals helped me reach the managers on their mobile numbers. The level of formality varied according to the manager and whether I went with a reference. I had to first contact the media consultant of one famous owner to arrange the meeting. Including this officially requested and arranged interview, the tone oscillated between an informal conversation and a structured interview in most of these meetings. Most of the participants moved between an informal you (*sen*) and formal you (*siz*), following the shifting feel of the conversation. At times they were speaking to a younger sister who needed guidance (*sen*), and at other times they were answering questions of a researcher (*siz*).

The average length of semi-formal interviews was an hour and a half, some lasting up to three and a half hours. Waiting for the interview to happen and observing, I sometimes spent up to seven hours in a place that gave me a sense of their multitude of clientele and priorities over the course of a day, during changing meal forms and priorities. I gathered menus of Turkish restaurants all over London, even from the ones that I was not able to visit and checked online reviews or news articles where available. I tasted as much food as possible, sometimes pushing personal dietary preferences and levels of fullness. Both as a client and during the interviews, I was welcomed with much hospitality and generosity.

While looking at situations where the food was as “much the interactant as the very condition of interaction” (Ingold 2010 p.S132), cook alongs, eat alongs and do alongs allowed me to “Know as [I] go” (Ingold 2010, S133). This sort of highly participatory, performative ethnography functions at the tense area between the theory and practice. Where I can’t hold a paper and pen, I am cooking and listening to the stories. All senses are activated in such encounters, whether the researcher aims at doing a sensory ethnography or not. Mind and body become part of an integrated tool of inquisition and practice contemporaneously. The fumes of the cooking meal stick to your clothes, the smell of the garlic remains on your hands and the next day, you share what went in your body to the same city’s sewage system. There is nothing as intimate as this sort of research. This is also where it is much easier to breach the ethical boundaries. Within the privacy of home, much more is shared with the ethnographer than the spoken word. All sorts of family tensions, psychological states, personal, legal and financial vulnerabilities come to the surface. The off-record and on record creates a liminal space, where it is hard to delineate one from the other. The ethics of consumption, but also the ethics of truth and the ethics of hospitality at times conflict with each other. In this research, I gave priority to the preferences of my participants about what to share and what not to. As what we shared on those tables is not possible to convey through a single thesis, the extent of their stories would be hard to do justice within such a frame.

I, as the researcher, needed to dwell while becoming knowledgeable along the paths of the fieldwork. Ingold notes "By *becoming knowledgeable* I mean that knowledge is grown along the myriad paths we take as we make our ways through the world in the course of everyday activities, rather than assembled from information obtained from numerous fixed locations" (2010, p.S121). Such forms of "ambulatory knowing" (Ingold 2010, S122) are an integral part of the food ethnographies, where the body, the movement, the ground of research come together in a setting where they all interact with each other, contributing to what constitutes the acts of knowledge making of the researcher.

My situatedness vis-à-vis the field also kept being modified. During the early stages of the fieldwork, I was myself a novice to the London, while during the writing, I was already a London dweller, creating different visibilities and invisibilities, moments of surprise or blindness while reflecting upon the ethnographic documentation.

**Researcher as stranger: ethnography abroad to ethnography at home**

Fabio Parasecoli, in his account of a meal shared with his relatives who emigrated to USA prior to him, notes how "food, abundant and delicious, eliminated any distance between [his] cousins and [him] during that emotional and unforgettable event" as "the interactions around the table, the body language, the sounds, were reminiscent of many of the family occasions that took place in Italy".

Despite this sense of "at home away from home" thanks to the familiarity of table commensality, he notes how the dishes served carried similar names, but looked, tasted and were served differently (Parasecoli, 2014, p.415).

This initial "puzzlement" was certainly the case for me when I first started the fieldwork, especially in the restaurants in London. I expected some element of unfamiliarity, conscious of the difference between the contexts of performance of the Turkish food: Istanbul, where I grew up, was a cosmopolitan city, yet was also the home of the Turkish food and London was a cosmopolitan city at a whole another scale and Turkish food was an import to London. I did not expect an "authentic" food, and thought I was open to all possibilities and variations of Turkish cuisine. Yet, almost until midway through my fieldwork, every encounter left me with an element of surprise and slight disappointment about the food or the way I was served, though as in Parasecoli's account, most socialities around the table seemed similar or at least felt familiar. It was not so much the presence of the unfamiliar "elements" that shocked me. It was rather how reduced the familiar was, sometimes to a picture on the wall reminiscent of my childhood's travel agencies depictions of touristic sites in Turkey or a *nazar boncuğu* (evil eye bead), the glass accessory that protects you from the evil eye of the others.

This stranger'ness does not simply prompt the impossibility of locating an original, a reference meal to which all other meals will be compared. Nor it is the consequence of a researcher in diaspora longing for the pleasures and comfort of homely food that can not be found.

I can't deny the occasional visit by the spectres of nostalgia during my years in UK and they did not follow a decreasing pattern but made rather random appearances, so in a way required improvisational techniques to deal with them symptomatically rather than the possibility of developing a sustainable zone free from nostalgia. Surprisingly, the food has been most familiar when my body and mind were pre-conditioned by longing. Though limited, at these times, any approximation of home was sufficient and not necessarily found in Turkish restaurants but brought by the warmth of Lebanese lentil soups or Persian meals ordered online by a friend in times of sickness.

I also thought I was not a novice to the experience of diasporeity. I regularly visited my paternal relatives in 1990s Munich. One of my homes was always a diaspora home. I later in my life lived abroad and had temporary homes in multiple countries. None of these experiences were enough to have a sense of familiarity with the sort of diasporeity that is happening in London.

What matters in this encounter with the unfamiliar in more or less familiar ways is the distance between the researcher assumed to study her home culture, away from home. Towards the end of my fieldwork, it became clear that all along, I was looking for homes in diaspora, while I was looking at people and dishes who were already at home, through the lens of a beginner Londoner, who was yet to be at and make home. I knew I had to be open to individual variations, pragmatic choices and the Londoner ways of doing things. I thought I was wise enough to have minimum common sense and sufficient practical experience with ethnographic skills prior to the fieldwork.

What I could not imagine was the magnitude and the regular re-occurrence of the surprise element. Wasn't I supposed to feel at home at a Turkish restaurant surrounded by visual, gustatory or social familiarity? There was no guarantee. Why didn't I know the answer to the question: "Chilli or garlic sauce?" at a kebab shop. What were they? I rather felt like a culinary tourist, lacking the tools that would give me a comfortable reference point for comparison. Every meal I had initially was a game between familiarity and unfamiliarity in terms of taste, texture and presentation. The table settings, the menu combinations, the smells, especially the smells, were at times oppressively alien. The variety of the dishes served in some restaurants also exceeded my knowledge of Turkish-Ottoman culinary traditions, so even some dish names did not enjoy easy referents to give me a sense of continuity. If it were not for the exuberant hospitality I experienced in each and every restaurant, cafe and household I visited, I would describe the entire fieldwork process as hostile to my senses and knowledge of Turkish food. I knew I was a stranger to myself, but remaining stranger to one's field during almost two years, felt simply too intense. I had to go through a process of habituation both in London and in my fieldwork encounters to be able to make sense of things, objects, tastes, and my previous familiarities with a supposedly Turkish culture that seemed only instrumental in terms of the linguistic skills it endowed me with. Even language could not be taken for granted though, as Turkish restaurants, representative of London population, employ staff from diverse linguistic backgrounds. While you may encounter a Turkish-speaking member of staff in any catering business in London, you may also not be able to find a Turkish speaking front of the house staff in a Turkish restaurant.

It was only after I took momentary from the sites of fieldwork and re-visited the field notes that I was able to properly locate this unfamiliarity and read the patterns: somewhere between the arguably modified ways of cooking and serving of Londoner Turkish and Kurdish, there was a pattern, a claim one might make that could sit comfortably within the London foodscape. I, by then more of a Londoner than I was at the beginning of the fieldwork (proven by my lack of surprise at the sight of mice in London streets, public transport or universities) had to realize that this initially unfamiliar to me confident and at home performance of food was what needed unraveling. I was the researcher *from abroad* during most of the fieldwork, and only during the writing process, these lines belonged to a researcher at home. My home-making itself was made possible and inspired by the food encounters that seemed to have already approximated to a great extent their at-home'ness when I initially met them.

This unfamiliarity is worth dwelling upon as it emphasizes how the social, ethnic, linguistic habitus we associate with spaces of birth is mobile, constantly in the making and until the researcher herself is immersed in the locality of food relations, it does not guarantee an advantaged start point vis-à-vis the communities and collectivities studied, despite the assumed commonality of place of origin. The researcher in diasporic fieldwork, is more of an import than the food relations of people assumed to be in diaspora, until she is part of that diasporic foodscape. The time spent in the field hence has major transformative power in the connections that the researcher forges between alien and familiar. The temporally gained familiarity and the increased access to the endemic meanings of the field is an inherent part of the ethnographic methodologies.

What I try to emphasise here is the curve of familiarity in the diasporic setting as opposed to being a more linear and accumulative process of familiarisation. One starts at the commonality of language, generational pop references, or a discussion on contemporary politics. This commonality very quickly dissolves into an area of lack of shared experiences. After all, being born in Turkey does not provide one with a clear set of instructions or cultural baggage that would be shared with anyone else who is born within the national boundaries. This strangerness to each other, is beyond the transversal cutting of socio-economic class, city of birth, ethnic or religious differences; but mainly of missing the lived experience of being in diaspora at a particular point in time, in a particular location.

Whether the researcher is received as a familiar element in the field, "one of our own" has implications in terms of comfort and openness levels of the participants, sometimes working to the advantage of the researcher, speeding up the processes of familiarization and trust building. This familiarity can also be as a counterproductive element, as reading the signifiers of class, political views and accents are easier and can replicate the perceived distances between the researcher and the participants, especially in case of their mismatch, replicating the power relations of the assumed status group implications of their place of birth[7]. In both cases, the quality and the quantity of the information shared would be dependent on the perceptions of proximity, altering the ethnographic data, hence the theoretical narratives. This "struggle" is not just a methodological one, but also a theoretical one.

[7] There were a few occasions where my educational background created a distance with the potential participants and on more than one occasion, I was asked whether I was rich to be able to afford doctoral studies in UK.

The diasporic ethnographic space, where the researcher arrives from the shared country of birth to the current dwelling land of the participants has further implications in terms of power relations of hospitality. The participants are much more familiar with the city, the country of the dwelling and hence assume at times the role of a mentor, guiding the researcher about where to buy the foods, where to look for flats, how to extend a visa. This years long experience "in situ" and the mastery of everyday tactics act as a constant reminder of the fact that the participants are at home, and possibly more at home than the researcher. Any assumed familiarity on the part of the researcher would only sustain her ignorance, unless she quickly adapts to the need of asking the questions that come from the actuality of the space and not from elsewhere. The design of the research, questions and the presuppositions of the researcher are decisive in terms of the theoretical outcomes; as well as the humbling loss of authority[8].

**Never ending fieldwork**

One of the challenges of the fieldwork is to account for the specificities of the individual narratives in their relation to patterns and a larger narrative that will give a sense of the patchwork that the interlocutors create. The danger with the ethnographies of the migrant populations is that, at the reception end, the answers provided by the researcher are almost always generalised to the entirety of the population, whose members rarely act as a cohort.

[8] In my case, being a novice in London created a mentor-mentee relationship where I was endowed with a pedagogical space. Me being from Istanbul, on the other hand, confirmed an ignorace of food that I could not surmount. 'You are from Istanbul, you would not know' was a common statement, participants who are unknown to each other uttered on multiple occasions.

An anthropological research therefore constantly needs to strategically place mnemonic markers in its textual outcomes, reminding the reader of the specificity of findings to particular sub-groups and contexts that the researcher interacted with.

The neighborhoods, cities and populations and even family structures change[9] and so do the food establishments, the dietary preferences or health needs of the individuals. The main disadvantage of having a common city of dwelling and research is that you can not simply close your eyes, or stop eating. Hence, beyond the official research, my insights have been shaped by a variety of encounters outsides the specifically allocated ethnographic time. While the specifically and systematically geared ethnographic gaze and attention is necessary for analytical purposes, the accidental, occasional space-off's (De Lauretis 1988) provide the possibility of constant check mechanisms, confirming or displaying the inconsistencies of the scholarly narrative.

These extra encounters are one factor among many that made my fieldwork a never-ending one. Even though I had systematic data collection with an allocated time-frame and specific encounters, there is never a clear cut distinction between the everyday engagement with food and the mobility of curiosities structured around it.

[9] During the writing process, almost a year after the fieldwork, one of the families had a baby and another female informant's husband left home. Addition to or substraction from the table changes the symbolic and material negotiations that take place during the meal times. What makes it to the table is a function of who makes it to the table. The health concerns accordingly modify the tablescapes when one is pregnant, hence responsible for the feeding of the within other, and subsequently when one becomes a breastfeeding mother. Such changes also transform the power dynamics of the table, altering the main authoritative voice who decides what constitues a meal and when it is to take place.

Through accumulative encounter, one's framework of thought and perception necessarily changes. Such mobility is enhanced by the mobility of the field itself, both a challenge and an added value of working with and on food.

While the ownership of the food establishments enjoy relative stability compared to the constantly changing serving staff as most of them are temporary, part-time workers whose main economic activity and identity lies outside of the catering establishment, the genres of restaurants, the fashions of food and the manifestation of these are rather mobile. There are always newcomers to the sector whose personal and professional preferences alter the face of the restaurants, and the necessity to catch up with neighborly gentrification processes or following mutating dietary trends, modify the professional prioritities of what to sell and serve. Such mobility makes it challenging to catch a single snapchat of a sector with a coherent "ethnic restaurant" image; and proliferates, if not shifts, where we need to look for a pattern.

The catering businesses speed of change was paralelled by the speed with which paradigms of thinking about the global world have shifted from a discourse of openness and multiculturalism to one that prioritised closure and enmity towards the other, specifically the migrant other, at least as manifested by the electoral choices of Brexit and Trump's presidency. At the same time, my country of origin, Turkey, has become hostile to almost anyone who had an alternative vision to that of the government as exemplified by the Gezi Park protests, later by the Academics for Peace initiative and post-coup state of emergency that allowed the government to prosecute many working in the public sector and universities.

Some of the protests to these events took the self-destructive forms of hunger strikes. Two fired public servants started their self-starvation against the government's imposition of civil and economic starvations upon its own public servants. [10] Inevitably, my own relationship to the field and how I relate to the UK as home altered over the course of the years. The time frame of PhD extending from the late 20s to early 30s, spread across cities and overcrowded with major life changes, losses and global changes came with emotionally and mentally crippling variations, that were experienced in the best case as shock, in the worst moments as despair at an individual level, which marked the difference of engagement to the field during research and later in writing process. While my legal visa status in the UK was not altered throughout this period, the way I engaged with it and the extent to which I could see it as home, I had to see it as home, changed. My changing acceptance of what makes good Turkish food in London, is one proof among others that while the food and the field changed, my relationship to those changed as well.

This brings us to the issue of the extra layer added during the passage from gathering of data to its representation. Without giving up its claim to truth and to the real, as in how things happen and how the interlocutors narrate these happenings, it is important to pause briefly on the inevitable curatorial engagement of the researcher during the rendering of the scholarly presentable textual material.

[10] https://hungryforourjobs.wordpress.com/2017/03/17/blog-post-title/

Madison, in her book *Critical Ethnography* reminds us the importance of positionality, the responsibility of the researcher in her awareness of her position vis-à-vis the *informants* but also the research and its wider implications (2005, p.5-10). Sharing the positionality of the researcher consists of presenting the steps of the research, but also the personal engagement and where the researcher stands. The opening up of the researcher is crucial to ensure a transparent conversation on a long-term basis and to reinforce the two-way exchange that is expected to take place over the up-coming months. As such, the researcher is not a recorder of facts that are presented by an *informant,* but complicit in the performances of home as part of the Turkish Speaking Community in London. Yasmin Gunaratnam, within the framework of multi-sited researches, discusses complicity in reference to Marcus as follows:

> For Marcus, complicity in research is what is needed to displace the 'regulative ideal' of rapport that is based upon the need to gain access to the worlds of experience of research participants. Complicity, Marcus argues, begins from the same insider/outsider positioning as rapport, but does not presume to be able to move 'inside' in order to obtain local knowledge. Rather, complicity is about a reflexive positioning at the inside/outside boundary, and is characterized by how the researcher can use this position to understand how the research relationship is situated within a broader social context. In this sense, the researcher and the research participant are not required to 'forget' who they are (and where they otherwise would be), to produce a rapport-filled research relationship. (Gunaratnam 2003, p.184; quoting Marcus 1998)

Gunaratnam furthermore asks for a recognition, explication and interrogation of the "shared, troubling 'curiosity and anxiety' between the researcher and research participant(s) to an outside, 'elsewhere" "within the topography of the research relationship as part of broader contexts, which are themselves subject to dynamic and on-going changes" (Gunaratnam 2003, p.184). Sharing the positionality of the researcher, including the affective economies that they imply is an important step in the establishment of the researcher as subjected to similar systemic strategies and market availabilities as the participant while performing home and that her curiosity lies in the specificities of the participant's experience.

**Recruitment of the participants**

The initial ties with the members of Turkish Speaking Community have been established through the activities in which I participated as a member of the Turkish speaking community with my own luggage, connections and networks from Turkey. Even though I did not know many people, being the graduate of a particular high school instantly gave me a sub-community in London. I joined the alumni association and attended regular meetings, with people from different backgrounds, ages and post codes. High school and university alumni groups' meetings in Turkish restaurants gave me the first chance to get a sense of the variety of restaurants run by Turkish speaking entrepreuneurs. I started an observational period in various Turkish restaurants in London as sites of encounter where Turkishness was performed. This observational period evolved into a minor ethnography due especially to Turkish restaurants' prominence among both Turkish speaking and non-Turkish Londoners.

Turkish-run restaurants matter as major actors of the London food scene in the various forms they take and the variety of clientele they accommodate. Kebap shops, fine dine restaurants, , or as hubs for mixed culinary traditions (British-Mediterranean Pubs, or Turkish-Lebanese, etc.) they respond to a variety of tastes and budgets. They are also one of the main income sources and social sites for Turkish Speaking Community. As will be later developed, restaurant work accommodates variety of legal statuses, linguistic capacities and motives of settlement. Any researcher curious about the performances of home has to take into account the constitution of this entrepreneurial, aesthetic foodscape. A major part of the ethnography has been realized in Ishtar, a fine-dine Turkish restaurant in the Marylebone area, where I was also able to recruit two participants for the larger performative ethnography of the research. Other participants have been recruited through accidental encounters in London and by referrals. The job I got at one of the cafés in my neighborhood was one such almost accidental occurrence, where after multiple encounters, but with rather brief interview, I switched from customer to employee.

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In this research, I particularly refrained from limiting the fieldwork in neighborhood(s) where Turkish and Kurdish people predominantly lived, hence giving a sense of a more or less coherent community. This locational framing of the researcher misses out on the larger lived experience and it is through the space-offs, the moments and nodes of invisibility that I thought one needed an intervention to the available literature on Turkish speaking people.

To this aim, in this research I focused on various sites and in these sites, different events that displayed the unfolding of the complex relationship between the food and acts of dwelling. On the one hand, this caused the muting or attenuating of the voice of certain connections between people and on the other it gave the chance to bring the concordant dynamics across sites to light. Overall, the aim to display the wider picture that the coming together of these constellations suggested went hand in hand with the challenge to do justice to the richness of each site.

Individual manifestations of the parts of this associative network was most apparent when it came to my relationship to these: while my relationship as a/the researcher was constant throughout the sites, the accompanying roles inevitably created different power structures and tensions as well as varying expositions of hospitalities. It was also inevitable that the information I gathered exceeded the formal fieldwork where the engagement with the sites and people is shadowed with the hanging and obvious telos of the encounter, one of gathering data for writing purposes. Up to the point where I was writing, the mundane conversations fed into, sometimes confounded and complicated what I understood and theorised as the relationship between home and food to be, and how the Turkish speaking communities come to perform, create and recreate that on a day to day basis.

This immersion in the site was partly the result of living in the city where I did the fieldwork. Every encounter, every recently opened restaurant or the difference in household food sharings were readily available and within sight.

The relationship to the site had slightly modified challenges of doing ethnography at home. London, the site of my research was not familiar initially, and it certainly was not home, but it became my home over time and I transformed from a temporary migrant, a tourist in sites, to a member of the diaspora. This clearly did not happen overnight and the fieldwork was both a constitutive element of this transformation and one, upon reflection, modified by that transformation itself.

## Chapter Two

## Diasporic Authenticities: Turkish restaurants[11] in London

Restaurants are not just eating-out places where food prepared by someone other than the eater is commercially and publicly consumed. They are complex sites where individual and group identities, social, cultural capitals and tastes are symbolically and materially negotiated in the relational space they create. In case of the restaurants run by migrant minorities, they are also condensed performance sites where pieces of 'other', or 'the world' are served on a plate, through tactful management of regionally or nationally marked culinary repertoires.

A rich literature on the migrant restaurants focuses on the culinary diplomacy these restaurants enact. By being representative performance sites of their national homes, these restaurants are seen as key actors in creating familiarity with the food of the other. Others focus on the commensality these create for co-ethnics. Instituting familiar sensescapes, these restaurant transport the eaters to their home country while allowing chances of eating together with 'alike' in a 'familiar' environment. Ethnically marked restaurants are increasingly cherished in cities as part of the pride they take in their diversity (Bell and Valentine 2006, Cook and Crang 1996, Hage 1997).

[11] Generically classified as Turkish restaurants, throughout the paper I will refer to a a variety of establishments that serve food including the take aways, *ocakbaşı* grill restaurants and *sulu yemek* (stew or casserole) places run by Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriots.

In London, where there are over 70 different regional/national cuisines (Karaosmanoglu 2013, 375), the foodscapes that are constituted by the activities of the Turkish speaking restaurants both speak to, and are shaped by, these cosmo-multicultural expectations (Hage 1997).

From the majority of these accounts however, the migrant himself/herself is missing (Hage 1997), both the food and the restaurant of the other are taken as an object whose characteristics are to be unveiled by the philosopher, ethnographer, by the gaze of the other's other (Ray 2016). Critical and powerful statements such as "Eating the other" (hooks 1998) therefore partially contribute to such objectifications by undermining the agency and the authority deployed by the migrants/ethnic others in the creations of the repertoires and taskscapes they play with. The other is not passively edible, but contributes to the parameters of how to be eaten. Moreover, the migrant is not always endowed with the skills necessary to own, manage or cook for a restaurant. Neither cooking skills, nor the managerial skills, travel in the baggage of the migrant, but need to be learnt as part of the creation of foodscapes.

Following Ray's invitation to hear what the (ethnic) restaurateurs have to say about their restaurants (2016), in the following chapter I focus on what kind of à la Turca foodscapes are enacted and performed with an emphasis on the managers' and owners' preferences. Diverging from Ray's findings that ethnic restaurants are foremost part of ethnic networks, I will argue that the Turkish restaurants cannot be understood as ethnic enclave economies based on an exploration of the recruitment strategies and priorities of the managers, and the flexibility in their deployment of culinary repertoires.

I will argue that Turkish restaurateurs become part of the London foodscape with an emphasis on individual choice and authority, and their successful stories of dwelling. Furthermore, I will argue that these restaurateurs might deploy culinary repertoires associated with either current Turkey or its past cosmopolitan repertoires such as Ottoman cuisine, but no longer rely on these, as the proliferation of their choice of restaurants show. The ethnic cuisine, as part of world cuisine, therefore remains a sellable concept, yet a direct link between the Turkish speaking restaurateur and a culinary repertoire that might suggest Turkey, can no longer be assumed. Therefore Turkish-speaking restaurateurs deploy authenticity; and through a claim of non-performative authenticity, authority and an area of activity that makes the mobility of culinary repertoires even more visible.

**A Tale of Contingencies**

Eating out establishments, including the take-aways, the cafes, pubs and bars, are particularly important for the visibilities and invisibilities they create for Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot communities in cityscapes. Scattered all over the city, these establishment paint the sensory materialities of London, whether they overtly claim the name Turkish restaurant, or subtly include dishes such as *Menemen* in their menus as cafés, as does *Cinnamon Village* in Tufnell Park. They increase their prominence as a workplace for Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriots especially after the textile factories start to close in 1990s, shifting the production to countries such as China, Bangladesh and Thailand. Those previously working in textile factories, mostly in ironing, move to the catering business as their main source of income.

Restaurant businesses are also preferred by the new arrivals, as they provide jobs that are most of the time manageable with little knowledge of English language for the newly-arrived students, unskilled labourers, and skilled labourers whose skills are not recognized or require further local qualifications (i.e. lawyers, doctors). In most cases, working in a restaurant as an employee also responds to the need for 'quick cash'. To this day, the majority of the catering workers are paid by the hour, on a weekly basis.

Hiding the tensions of the informal work and pay conditions, such speed of access to financial remuneration for one's work is also perceived as an opportunity. "No one would stay hungry in London (*Londra'da kimse aç kalmaz*). There is always a job if you want to work. [...] You make money when you work, you don't when you don't. As simple as that." says Mustafa, waiter and bar tender at *Kilis*.(source) The perceived ease with which one can enter and exit the catering sector as a waiter and dish washer makes it a preferred temporary occupation for especially the students and those below their 30s, whether they are recent arrivals to London or in between jobs. Designers, actors, early career researchers, even tennis instructors waiting to be accredited in the UK all wash dishes, serve kebabs and clean tables. While for the majority of these, their work is temporary and distinct from their professional identification, the professionalisation within the catering sector is not uncommon. Having worked in various restaurants as commis, waiter and chef, Onder (Haz, male, 40s) for example is now the owner of a major chain of Turkish restaurants in London. He says "We did not go in the restaurant business because we were good economists and saw a need in the market. We just needed money very quickly and had no capital to start with".

Ozkan (*The Osidge Arms*), Engin (*Ishtar*) and Murat (*The Blue Legume*) are just some of the today's successful restaurant owners who washed dishes, cleaned and cooked for years in various restaurants including Italian and French restaurants and British pubs, before gathering the necessary financial capital through savings or loans to open their own business.

Gathering the financial capital to open one's restaurant clearly does not guarantee success or willingness to stay in it. Restaurant ownership is a complicated taskscape that requires time, space, and staff management. It requires chefs, if one has not already acquired these skills along the way. It is also a labour-intensive work that requires affective investment, keeping most of the time those involved away from their families due to its asocial hours. Since the proliferation of Turkish restaurants in 1990s the legend goes that there are hundreds of restaurants that did not survive the exigencies of the sector. It is therefore with great modesty that the surviving owner-managers of 1990s, when asked about their stories often say: "We have been lucky".

Onder's account of his entry to the catering sector in 1990s to access quick cash further resonates with today's non-managerial staff's *accidental* ending up with the restaurant work. Melis (early 20s, female, waitress at a Kurdish-run café) expresses her journey from student to being a full-time member of a café where she used to come to read her book as follows:

> I came to London to study design at Central Saint Martins. When I finished my studies, I wanted a bit of a break from design work. I was a bit bored I guess. But I also had to pay rent, and eat. One day when we were chatting with the owner of this café, he asked me if I would like to work on the weekends. I did not have any experience before, I mean, look at me, I am not the most talented person to work in a café. I mean at home, I don't even make proper Turkish tea, I just put the tea bag in boiled water. But Serkan, the owner did not care. He asked if my English was good, then told me to come that Saturday. This is how I *fell* into making sandwiches. [...] I was supposed to work only few hours every weekend and now I work everyday.

When asked about whether Melis sees her work as temporary and if she considers returning back to design, she replies, amused:

> I don't know. That's what I do now, and it keeps me busy. In a way I am still doing my profession, I design paninis. I don't know. My job at the café pays me. Not that well. But it works for me for now. Maybe one day I'll open my own café, then I can earn more. [She laughs] I actually don't get to design the paninis. I just have to make them as they are on the menu. If I open my place, I can actually design them myself.

Serkan (Male, late 30s, owner, manager and chef) who owns the café where Melis works, bought the café from their previous owners "who were bored with the business" with money he borrowed from his brother living in Germany, after losing his job as a project manager in a textile company specialised in sports clothing imported mainly from India.

> I am actually a textile engineer. I got fired from my previous job after a dispute. There was a problem with an order. It was not my fault, it was the fault of the supplier in India, but my boss here did not care. I am disposable after all, I am just a worker there.
>
> The supplier is harder to find than a project manager. They got rid of me, instead of the supplier. Anyway. I looked for similar jobs for few months, nothing. You know, project or account manager kind of jobs. Then a friend of mine mentioned this café on sale while we were drinking at my place. We joked about it first. I was a bit tipsy, you know. But the next morning when I woke up, I thought, why not. It is also close to my house. I can also run my own business, be my own boss. I said, I will give it a go and threw myself into an adventure. That is how I got this 'pain in the neck' [*bela*]. There is nothing one can't learn in life. I still learn. [...] My chef left me. So now, I cook English breakfast myself.

Onder, Melis and Serkan's accounts are important to exemplify a series of testimonies that express the entry to and mostly stay in the eating out business as a chance encounter, an accidental happening initially guided by the premise of quick monetary return.

Such narratives of *falling into* catering business that is perceived to be outside of their readily available professional skills, and learning it *along* the way, -that any skill required in an eating out establishment can be learnt from cleaning the toilets to cooking or doing accounts, summarises the dwelling ethos of the Turkish eating out establishments.

**Locating the Turkish Restaurants**

Karaosmanoglu states as of 2013 that there are more than 200 Turkish restaurants in London, excluding fast-food and take out buffets (Karaosmanoglu, 2013b: 373). Ibrahim Dogus, head of the Centre for Turkey Studies (CEFTUS) and one of the organizers of the British Kebap Awards estimates that there are about 25,000 take-aways run by Turkish and Kurdish in UK, with the majority in London (Interview). There are also an increasing number of cafés, as well as pubs serving food or ingredients that are generically associated with Turkey as Mediterranean or Middle Eastern food across London. Strüder, based on her research on Turkish speaking economies in London, notes that "the location of restaurants and take-aways is spread throughout London in more than 45 postcode districts" with a maximum number of establishments in Northern London (Strüder 2003, p.21). These researches quantify the number of Turkish speaking entrepreneurs and their engagement in the economies as Turkish-speaking, thus does not provide an exhaustive measure of the foodscapes à la Turca, complicated with the activities of non-Turkish in various taskscapes, nor the Turkish entrepreuneurs who choose as their area of activities other ethnic cuisines or non-ethnically marked cafés or eating out arrangements.

A series of studies recognise the ethnically marked restaurants for their contribution to urban economies, mostly focusing on the formations, deployment and sustenance of ethnic minority networks and their survival strategies (Kesteloot and Mistiaen 1997, Basu and Altinay 2003, Strüder 2003, Masurel *et al.* 2004, Wahlbeck 2007, Altinay and Altinay 2008, Katila and Wahlbeck 2012). From such perspectives, the term 'ethnic enclave economy' aims at capturing the spatial clustering of business activities of migrants and ethnic minorities (Portes 1981, Portes and Bach 1985), while 'ethnic economy' refers to the economic activities, mostly as small businesses in specific economic sectors, usually in sectors that are labour intensive but do not require skilled labour" (Wahlbeck 2007, p.545). As Strüder also remarks in her review of such terminologies, these vocabularies are highly problematic (2003) as they overemphasise the dependency of a business initiated by a migrant to its access to *co-ethnic* capital, *co-ethnic* labor, *co-ethnic* information and *co-ethnic* market (Altinay and Altinay 2008). Among these researches, Altinay and Altinay's work on Turkish entrepreneurships in London and Wahlbeck's research on the kebab industry in Finland are particularly important for their contextualisation of the ethnic entrepreneurship as integrated to the larger urban and national economies and trends. Despite this recognition, the authors see 'ethnicity' as a *modus operandi*, that has advantages or disadvantages for ethnic economies (Wahlbeck 2007) or 'ethnicity' as the container of "cultural factors" that have an effect on how the business is run, but also how successful it is (Altinay and Altinay 2008, p.25; also Basu and Altinay, 2002).

According to Schiller and Çağlar, the deployment of an 'ethnic lens' in such researches is reductive as it "assume[s] that migrants from a particular nation-state or region constitute an ethnic group before their identity, actions, social relations, and beliefs are studied" (2011, p.65). An ethnic lens furthermore misplaces the social, cultural and financial capitals that are deployed in the operations of such businesses to an elsewhere, a country of origin, as opposed to analysing the complex web of relations they enact and their contributions to changing outlook and taskscapes of especially cities. Before moving on to the transformations that an assumed Turkish culinary repertoire goes through within the specificity of London, I will look at the changing features of the social and cultural capitals.

**Social and cultural capital re-routed**

The ethnic lens unfortunately haunts even the most detailed and meticulous analyses of Turkish speaking people and their culinary presence in London. Among the most recent ones, Sirkeci *et.al.* (2016) and Dedeoglu (2014) suggest an ethnic enclave economy model for Turkish restaurants, where restaurants appear as spaces governed mainly by the family relations and that are staffed by co-ethnics who are either relatives of the owner and/or acquaintances from their city of origin. Explained mostly in reference to a competitive economic environment where the price advantage can only be maintained through the exploitation of family members (Dedeoglu 2014, p.62, also Sirkeci *et.al.* 2016, p.104) restaurants are also seen as the containers of "close networks and family connections" that "maintain traditional social and cultural practices" (Sirkeci *et. al.* 2016, p.113).

According to these authors, with the exception of the financial capital that took the form of "[family] savings accumulated during the hey days of garment production" in London, the social and cultural capitals that define Turkish restaurants are brought in to London as a closed system and have been reiterated as such since. Such accounts blur the transnational financial capital acquisitions to enter the catering business, through money borrowed from members of the family located in Germany (Serkan); or from the entrepreneur's previous or on-going business transactions in Turkey. Mehmet (Male, late 30s, owner) for example, opens a restaurant in Dalston with the capital he accumulated in Turkey through his hotel chains and the event management company he runs. But more importantly, these researches conducted only in the Northern neighborhoods of London where there is a denser Turkish speaking population, miss out on the complexities of a wider look at the Turkish restaurants found across London.

My experience as a customer in over 60 restaurants across London including the ones located in Northern boroughs, as an ethnographer who conducted semi-structured interviews with 16 restaurant managers and owners and informal conversations with many more but moreover as an employee in a café in Tufnell Park for six months and a restaurant in Dalston for another six months, showed that the deployments of social and cultural capital from the perspective of ethnic economy, understood as mainly instituted and governed by the relations with the co-ethnics, are neither uniform, nor straightforward in the Turkish speaking restaurant business. The foodscapes à la Turca constituted by the tasks required by restaurant ownership and management are rather responsive acts of dwelling.

The managers and owners are not afraid to re-route when necessary and relationships with co-ethnics, as employees or as customers, cannot be assumed to be one of dependency, enjoyment or ease.

**Recruitment of Staff**

Unlike the literature's suggestion of reliance on co-ethnics and mainly family members and acquaintances as source of labor, the majority of my fieldwork showed that the presence of a Turkish-speaking staff is not guaranteed in Turkish restaurants and the interviewed owners and managers use a mixture of criteria and medium as part of their recruitment strategies of the co-workers who will assist them in the accomplishment of the tasks required for the livelihood of a restaurant.

Language proficiency in English and having a positive outlook are the main criteria of recruitment for the front of the house staff. Proficiency in both Turkish and English was mentioned as a condition of recruitment only in the restaurant in Dalston where I worked. Even there, where I participated in the job interviews, speaking Turkish was a necessary but not sufficient condition; instead, basing his decision on "the agility of mind and body" and previous experience, the manager ended up hiring one Turkish speaking, one Greek and one Italian waitress.

Engin's waiting staff in *Ishtar* during my fieldwork was also mainly non-Turkish speaking. When asked about their recruitment criteria on multiple occasions, Engin, his manager and his chef stated that they hire people "who know how to behave" (*Oturmasını, kalkmasını bilecek*). An elusive concept, when I asked about what would constitute "behaving", they referred to how "elite" their clientele was. If someone wanted to work at *Ishtar*, they needed to be presentable and needed to have manners. For Engin, a body language that suits the expectations of his clientele was more important than the ability to carry 10 plates. "You can learn how to carry the plates up and down the stairs without breaking in a couple of weeks at most, but you can't learn how to carry your body after a certain age". Hoping to get a clear idea of what they meant, I jokingly asked whether they would hire me. "If you learn quickly, why not" Engin replied. For the owner and manager of *Ishtar*, neither Turkish language skills, nor previous experience were necessary to work in their establishment as waiting staff.

Onder, owner of chain of restaurants *Haz, Ev* and *Ta*s, that are mostly located in the business districts of London, also does not necessarily prefer to hire Turkish speaking waiters and waitresses. Experience in catering business overrules the expectations of speaking Turkish. He does, however, expect a certain familiarity with the dishes from his waiting staff, though these are also part of a repertoire that the hired staff can learn on the job.

> There are lots of young people who are looking for jobs. I am never short of staff. There are lots of students in London. I try not to say no to anyone who enters from that door. [...] Polish, German, Italian and Greek ones usually have experience in serving. They start working at a young age in their countries. Our kids [*bizim çocuklar* referring to the young students from Turkey] do not know how to work. They come here to learn English. Sometimes I need to say no to them. Some of them, even if I say yes, do not survive a week. [...] If they have experience, they start as waiters. But I actually want all my staff to start in the kitchen. I myself started by washing the dishes. They need to watch the chef, learn the dishes, smell the dishes. They need to taste it. After all, they are the ones who will sell the dishes, am I right? If the customer asks what is in the mousakka, they need to be able to tell. [...] I learnt everything from scratch. If I did, they can as well.

While both Onder and Engin mainly emphasise the abundance of willing workforce and choose their waiting staff among those who walk through the door, Ugur (Male, early 30s, manager of a restaurant in Dalston) relies on the available smart phone applications (i.e. Job Today), Facebook groups where jobs in London are advertised and his restaurant's social media accounts including Twitter and Instagram. Despite being located in Dalston, an area known for its dense Turkish speaking population, Ugur's need for bilingual waiting staff is neither given nor automatically met by the web of relations assumed to exist among co-ethnics in the above mentioned literature of ethnic economies.

This does not suggest that there are no established networks among the restaurant owners and managers, but shows that the Turkish restaurants deploy a variety of techniques in their recruitment strategies rather than relying solely on their previously established social and cultural networks. Serkan, for example, recruits his staff through a combination of techniques including phone applications, referrals from other owners and managers but also among his regular customers, as it was the case in his recruitment of Melis and me. Having no prior acquaintance with either the owner or the skills required to work in a café, my informal job interview consisted mostly of a negotiation of time availabilities while I was sipping an Americano, that I ordered as a customer. Within minutes, I turned from a customer to an employee.

The ease and speed with which the owners and managers employ workers unskilled in the catering business as waiting/floor staff is not replicated in the hiring of chefs. These predominantly rely on referrals and job adverts placed in social media accounts, specifying what kind of cooking skills are required (i.e. "grill chefs"). The recruited chefs and sous-chefs mostly go through a trial and training period, during which they learn 'how things are done' in that specific restaurant where they will be employed. Despite the cooking skills' perceived complexity compared to floor duties and an expectation of prior training, the cooking skills are not seen as essentialised cultural capitals, but as learnt and improved on the job, constantly renovated and transferrable. Ozkan (Male, late 40s, *The Osidge Arms*) says: "We have a Bulgarian lady in the kitchen, we taught her how to do some dishes, so she stayed with us". Ali (*Best Kebab*) says, "It's difficult to prepare the *döner*, but you can learn how to cut and prepare it in a year. I learnt it in a year".

Many managers also mention that being relatives with the owner or having been referred by a friend of the owner does not guarantee the sustainability of the job. A trial period is therefore crucial to see if the new employee will "fit to the establishment or not" (Engin). As the recruitment strategies and the importance of the trial period for both the recruitment of chefs and non-managerial staff show, the owners and managers value more the availability, the qualities of being hard-working and being able to learn and adapt to the environment they will be working, over having extended experience with skills required for catering business.

**Skills learnt *along* the way**

It is important to note that the faith with which the managers choose to employ an inexperienced team member, is mainly informed by their own processes of skill acquisition. The majority of the managers and chefs themselves learned their managerial and cooking skills in London. None of the chefs or managers I interviewed had the skills necessary to cook a meal or run a restaurant business when they first arrived in London. Engin (owner, *Ishtar*) expresses this lack of trained knowledge by making a distinction between a job and a profession: "Restaurant business was just my job initially. I studied at a Maritime Faculty. Now it became my profession". Like Engin, most start with jobs in the restaurant business for either lack of alternatives, or because it provided fast income, and in some cases, because they had relatives or friends who offered jobs. Over time, they professionalize, and some move their way up to the management, acquiring necessary cooking and restaurant management skills on the go, through formal trainings and/or apprenticeships.

This acquisition of culinary skills however is not confined to the locale of Turkish restaurants. Can, Murat, and Onder all work in French and Italian restaurants, either before or between jobs at Turkish speaking restaurants. Like many chefs whose job experience exceeds the Turkish restaurants, Metin (chef at *Ishtar*) prides himself in being able to cook anything that is required of him. Culinary repertoire hence is not perceived as a luggage brought to UK as part of an innate or already mastered 'authentic' heritage, but one that is acquired in UK to which then personal taste and preferences were added. "I have never worked in a restaurant before coming to London. I was working at a bookshop. We came with nothing" says Onder, "Nothing at all" referring to his initial lack of both cultural and economic capital. Such perceptions of culinary repertoire necessary for restaurant business as learnable, trainable and transferable are therefore the main reason why as employers, managers and owners value motivation, willingness to work long hours and being open to learning over experience, a knowledge of culinary repertoires or even Turkish language.

**Customers Improper to London**

The image of ethnic economies as catering to and depending on co-ethnics further becomes problematic especially in case of the restaurants in Central London. Proudly serving to a mixed clientele, the managers and chefs of these restaurants regularly complain about the difficulty of serving Turkish customers and are not afraid of 'losing' them.

Murat, who runs the British cafe chain *The Blue Legume* says that when Turkish arrive as a group, they never order at the same time.

> I mean you take the drinks order, two or three order something. Others don't say a thing or they say they don't want anything. The moment you bring the ordered drinks, then the rest say, oh yea, give me a drink as well. There are things like that. No one orders at the same time among the Turkish. They just make our job really difficult.

Ismail, owner of *The Best Turkish Kebab* takeaway says that the Turkish don't know how to queue, or respect those who queue.

> English are real gentlemen, you know. They educated themselves in a lot of matters. They pay and they know where to wait, how to wait. The [Turkish] guy comes and yells from behind the queue, "Hey bro, give me a döner" [*Kardes bana bir döner versene*]. Don't you see there are all these people waiting? I don't want to single out anyone. But these Turkish people [*Bu Türkler*] they just don't know how to behave. I enjoy most serving the English customers.

Can, who worked in various non-Turkish and Turkish restaurants including the *Gallipoli* chain, now owner and manager of *La Divina* Italian Café/restaurant in Angel similarly draws attention to an absence of proper behavior due to the lack of a restaurant culture, or "socialization", one that was absent in his childhood memories of Turkey:

> In Turkey, going to a restaurant is still an occasional thing. It's a special thing. But here it is a lot more socialized. It happens almost everyday. A couple comes and eats here after work before going home. [...] I don't know though, maybe it changed. I haven't been living there since a long time.

These accounts of the managers diagnose a lack of suitable codes of conduct on the part of the Turkish customers, breaching the rules of the contractual relationship and the order of things, due to lack of general education (Ismail) or socialization (Can) that would ensure 'proper' restaurant behavior. Such lack is occasionally extended as generalisations about other minority groups. Ismail says "Jamaicans don't know how to wait either". At other times, they come in the form of complaints about the tourists' behaviour. Both Engin and Can mention their lack of enjoyment and difficulty of serving tourists compared to their regular customers. In these instances, tourists as temporary visitors to London, are similarly framed as insufficiently equipped for the conventions of an established eating out culture that is proper to London. The tourist they have in mind however, is not the "new tourist", the new *flaneur*, but rather someone lacking the rules of hospitality business as proper to London.

Engin and his staff at *Ishtar* include the language schools' international students in this group, though adding that the age is a contributing factor. *Ishtar* has an agreement with one of the internationally renowned English schools in the area. This school brings groups of students to *Ishtar* during their orientation program. 20-25 students from all over the world, who came to learn English during a

period of few weeks to few months in London, have one of their first meals in a Turkish restaurant. *Ishtar*, as it does with the group meals, gives them a set menu for lunch. This international group of people is perceived to lack the proper Londoner behavior, but also familiarity with the Turkish cuisine, that is understood to be familiarity with the London culinary repertoire.

> We put them downstairs, so they can't bother the rest of the lunch regulars upstairs. [...] We make them a set menu, otherwise we can't manage. These people don't live in London after all. They are just visiting. They are not familiar with our food. If we try to explain each of them what's in every dish, we can't serve them until the evening.

This statement is significant as it shows that a familiarity with the Turkish food is seen as a function of having familiarity with London, which is the home of their restaurant activities; and not seen as a lack that stems from not having been to Turkey.

**"Don't you know how to read?" Menus as authoritative agents**

Turkish speaking customers' difficulty is furthermore framed as a recurrence of disregard of or challenges posed to the menu. They either do not read the menu, and ask for the waiter to provide the information instead; or they require modifications of the dishes, to suit their individual tastes.

Ilhami who ran a kebab shop and a fish restaurant in the past and who now owns a British pub serving Thai food in Hoxton says:

> [...] my kitchen staff used to complain when Turkish customers arrived. [...] They [the customers] would say, have you got rice? Good. Then, put some prawns in it and turn it around in the pan, would you? Things that don't exist in the menu... When English arrive, they look at the menu, take a starter, a main course, a dessert. A drink. Then, bye!

Any modification of the menu is also seen as a breach of the contractual relationship, an extra workload and a burden by the floor staff. "Don't you know how to read? Why is the menu there?" asks Ruzgar, waiter and bar tender at *Ishtar*, Baker Street.

> If you are allergic to nuts, don't take the chestnut chicken, we write it there for a reason. [...] Every time someone asks me to modify a dish, I have to put it in the notes section on the computer and then run downstairs to check it with the chef to see whether he got it. Then, the other customer on table 3 has to wait to place their order.

As Ruzgar's account exemplifies, any demand that challenges the rigidity of the menu –that is also the basis of the computerized system of order taking- comes with extra effort that slows down the process and lowers the standard of service quality for other customers.

“The customer is always right, isn’t he” he says with a tone of scepticism, “That’s why I like British customers, they are simple. They read, order and leave, and they never complain. If they don’t like it, they just don’t come back”.

Menus are particularly empowered in the London restaurant scene where entrepreuneurs need to negotiate and ensure communication among a highly multilingual clientele and staff. Even in cases where both the customer and the serving staff are proficient in English, the accents or different pronunciations present occasionally an obstacle to verbal communication. The menus in such settings, detailing the list of ingredients and suitability for various dietary preferences (i.e. vegan, vegetarian, halal) become the most reliable means of communication, a written code of availability. Though Onder prefers his waiting staff to develop a familiarity with the dishes and their contents for example, the detailed, bilingual descriptions of the menus in Turkish restaurants ease the burden of the waiting staff. The waiter is no longer required to memorise, and in fact does not even need to know the name of the dishes. His intermediary informative task between the kitchen and the customer is delegated to the menu. The relationship between the waiter and the customer is expected to be regulated by the menu’s authoritative voice, rather than the waiter regulating the menu.

The level of flexibility the restaurateurs have with the menu is dependent on their individual managerial preferences, but also on their locations and their clientele as a function of this location. Efficiency, speed and standard of service seem to be a bigger issue for the establishments mostly catering lunch or dinner to professionals working in their areas.

When the establishment shifts to a residential area and the clientele's purpose of visit to leisurely eating, the speed is more easily compromised at the service of individual preferences of the customers, depending on the time of the day and how busy the establishment is. Serkan (Owner and chef, café in Tufnell Park) is more flexible during week-days for example, accommodating extra ingredients or omissions from paninis, salads and breakfast options he serves though he advises the staff taking orders on the weekends never to accept any special requests. The items on the menu are prepared with an automatism that is otherwise broken in case of an extra demand, and in busy times compromising speed and quality of preparation, such requests work counter-productively to customer satisfaction.

What kind of flexibility will be accommodated is also dependent on the *form* of the eating out place. In a take-away place where the wrap, for example, is prepared in front of the customer, the speed and modifications are not seen as anthithetical to the customisation of the wrap, but are part of the combined premise of being a take-away establishment. Concise and even minimalist communication between the customer and the staff results in the speedy production of a sandwich or a wrap that is customised from the choice of bread to the accompaniments, with the same speed of communication and conciseness of movements. After the customer announces the meat or vegetable preferences and places the order, it is a matter of minutes for the ordered items to come together. Questions that are mainly voiced as dropping ingredient names with a rising intonation (i.e. *Chilli sauce or garlic sauce? Onions? Salad, mate?*) are accompanied with quick hand gestures of picking the affirmed ingredients from

the fridge that marks the liminal space between the customer, and the food and the manager. Once the order reaches the end of this minimalist assembly line of production, there is no guarantee that it will have anything in common with the order that precedes or follows it, besides the standardised series of movements that gave rise to it. A vegetarian halloumi wrap with grilled vegetables and salad is served and consumed with the same speed as the *döner* served in a *pide or pitta bread,* with no salad and chilli sauce.

Many takeaways take pride in this speedy customised service they are able to offer and further use it as a way to distinguish themselves from other chain fast-food outlets. Ismail asks:

> Can you choose what goes in your burger in McDonalds? You can't. All is done at the back. Here you see how fresh the salad is. You let us know what you want and we make it exactly how you want it. You get exactly what you want[12].

The statement "you get exactly what you want" clearly refers to the freedom of customising among the selection of ingredients on offer by the take-away outlet and does not imply an unconditional carte blanche, as the customisations are still bound by the ideals of standardisation, even in take-away shops.

[12] A comparison with McDonalds is common among the take away owners and workers, cherishing kebab take aways for their flexibility of ingredients, but also for serving grilled and healthy food, and more importantly for knowing what goes in the meat. Some take-aways take further pride in preparing their *döner* meat in house as opposed to buying it ready-made from suppliers in Germany.

*Woody Grill*, a kebab shop located next to the tube station in Camden unexceptionally refuses any customer's demand of modifying the quantity of meat that goes in the wrap or pitta. If one orders chicken or lamb skewers, the standard quantity is two skewers. During multiple of my visits, different customers, mostly female and Turkish speaking, ask to be served only one skewer instead of two, as the portions are too big for them, and each time, they have been politely refused.

Over a couple of months and multiple visits, I tried my luck with it, and ordered *Adana,* a spicy minced meat skewer carrying the name of the Southern city of Adana in Turkey; and asked each time to have only one skewer of meat instead of two. I also got refused unexceptionally, once despite a lengthy speech on food waste I prepared in advance and had with the manager. Each time when I inquired about the reason, I got the same response: "This is how we serve it. You can just throw it away if you like". The customisations are therefore welcome to the extent that they do not compromise standards of portions and practice, expressed as part of an authorial choice that belongs to the specific establishment.

The standardisation in restaurants, similarly refer to a standardisation of practice within the confines of that specific restaurant, and yet excludes the flexible customisations that take-away outlets offer. Standardisation of a particular dish is understood and practiced by chefs and managers, not as compliance with a set recipe, or original way of doing a dish; but being able to serve the same dish, every time the customer orders it, in the same way; being able to stick to *their own way* of doing things.

The chefs and managers' deployment of standardisation in situ as an ideal -as opposed to the standardisation they claim in reference to other Turkish restaurants (i.e. This is how olives are served in London) goes hand in hand with a narrative of distinguishing themselves from other similar restaurants or eating out establishments, through the authorial signatures they add to aesthetics of the plate or through minor adjustments to ingredients justified on the basis of personal taste.

Vehbi, (Male, 50s, worked as chef in over ten restaurants across London) notes how he likes to use coriander instead of parsley in *kisir. If they don't like it, they don't have to eat it. That's how I like it.* Sidar, (Female, early 40s, chef) takes pride in the colorful plates she prepares as much as the taste of her dishes in *Melek Kitchen*, Dalston. During one of my informal visits there, a Turkish speaking friend of mine orders meatballs -*kofta* from the menu, and asks Sidar not to put any peppers, one of the condiments the dish is served with. Sidar refuses to comply with the request and answers in a soft voice: *If you don't like it, just leave it on your plate.* When I ask Sidar about it later, she explains how the presentation of the dish is part of the experience to be served. In her tone, there is also the pride of being the author of such aesthetically appealing plate.

> Everything on the plate is not just to eat, you know, this is how I designed the plate, red tomatoes on the salad, next to green pepper and the yellow purée. They look good this way. The dish looks beautiful, don't you agree? If I don't put the pepper, then the plate looks empty, it looks incomplete. I can't send out the plate like that.

A rigidity and refusal to serve the individual requests based on authorial choices resonate with the emphasis they put on their successful professionalisation including standardisation of dishes, uniforms for the waiting staff and an emphasis on doing things 'the legal way' as opposed to informal and even illegal employment conditions (i.e. exceeding the legal work hours or employing undocumented workers). Inherent to such discourses of pride through acquisition of professional skills and compliance with the law, as well as the proper restaurant behavior, is the suggestion that, by means of their dwelling activities in the London foodscape, they are better dwellers than some of their customers, those who lack familiarity with the London eating culture, whether they are Turkish, Jamaican or tourists. It is important to note that the success of this dwelling activity is also part and parcel of a self-differentiation and distinction from the rest of the Turkish speaking community, an emphasis on lack of socialisation with them, and in 'learning' instead, from their clientele, for central London restaurants, to the invisibility of their Turkish speaking members.

The clash of expectations is indicative of more than a mismatch of social and cultural capitals between the restaurateur and his/her customer based on their class, urban/rural background. The narrativisation of an insatiable Turkish vs. trained Londoner customer shows that through judgmental re-telling of improper behavior of mainly their co-ethnic customers and by dissociation from them, the managers and restaurant owners claim a success of their dwelling activities in reference to an individual authorial voice (also Karaosmanoglu 2013) but also in reference to London as the site of their activity and a Londoner customer.

**The Insatiable Turkish**

The ubiquitously performed expression of dissatisfaction and demand for modification on the part of the Turkish customers is also an authoritative claim to what constitutes the proper and tasty food as well as an assertion of their individual tastes. Ilhami self-reflexively admits: "As a matter of fact, I'm also difficult. I also expect to get what I want." At times though, *wanted* is so specifically structured that it exceeds the possibilities of fulfillment in a professional setting.

Can, the manager of a Turkish-run Italian restaurant, tells the story of one customer he met when he was working as a waiter at Gallipoli restaurant:

> "Let me tell you about something that happened in *Gelibolu* [Turkish for Gallipoli], it'll make you laugh. [...] One day a Turkish lady arrived, with a friend. She asked for spinach with yoghurt. We said, great and served them. After they finished, we asked, how did you find it, did you like it? I still remember her face. She said, yeah, we really liked it but it was not like my mother's. She said, I'd like it very much if you told this to your chef. With a patronizing attitude. She was rather a young one. I mean it's really funny. I told our chef. Our people are rather eccentric about this topic [*Bizim insanımız o konuda biraz ilginç*]."

Önder, who is the owner and headchef of *Tas and Haz* restaurant chain in central London recognizes the impossibility of satisfying the home made taste in commercial establishments serving at least hundreds of dishes everyday. He expresses this unattainability as a no-where'ness, and not just as a matter of performance: "The taste of homemade dish can be found nowhere" [*Ev yemeğinin lezzeti hiçbir yerde bulunmaz*] In the above customer's demand, the excessive demand lies foremost in the impossibility of replicating the domestic and motherly food in a commercial setting. The act of wanting, longing for such desire is seen as the faulty behavior on the part of the customer for not knowing and respecting commercially produced food's possibilities.

The restaurateurs' depiction of 'an impossible to please Turkish speaking customer' extends beyond the judgments of taste of a particular dish. The restaurateurs suffer from a general impossibility of the *wanted,* sometimes expressed in the forms of criticism directed at the excesses of either the spatial setting or the arrangements of meals. Hüseyin Özer, thought to be the pioneer of proliferation of Turkish restaurants and trainer of many of today's chefs and managers, criticises what he calls the oriental decorations:

> They put *kilims* on the walls. Who would want to eat with *kilims* on the walls? They hang whatever they can find from the ceiling. Lamps are falling on your plate. They overcrowd the space. You need to stand out with your food. It looks like lamps will fall on your plate. Will you eat lamps? Nonesense [*Saçmalık*]. This is not how it is done[13].

[13] These criticisms of an oriental image of Turkey are also present in Karaosmanoglu's interviews with Hüseyin, from her fieldwork in 2010-2011.

This humoristic criticism directed at his sectoral rivals by a chef who aims at distinguishing himself for revolutionising the Turkish food and how it is served in London by providing a more minimalistically decorated setting, is regularly repeated by Turkish speaking customers from an urban, middle-class background. Kemal, an engineer in his 50s, a regular customer of the café where I worked, thinks these kind of decorations misrepresent Turkey and Turkish-speaking people:

> Go to Turkey now, is this the kind of setting people eat? Small-minded people bring their village brains. I don't know maybe this is how they used to eat in their tiny village, when they were a kid. But this is not how we eat. If they stayed in Turkey, they would not eat this way either. Things change. But they don't change. It is because of these people that they still think Turkish people are backwards. We are Europeans. We eat like Europeans.

Getting rid of *kilims* unfortunately does not provide a criticism-free zone. Özkan who runs *The Osidge Arms*, a British pub serving a variety of dishes and most known for its brunches, faces similar criticism regularly about the arrangements of the dishes he serves for open buffet breakfast.

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Karaosmanoglu notes, how in these accounts 'traditionalist' approach to décor signified by *kilims* on the walls is seen as being antithetical to an image of Turkey as modern, European and developed, using these almost interchangeably (2013, p.378).

> They [the Turkish speaking customers] say, what are these stuffed wine leaves doing here? Stuffed wine leaves for breakfast? If you don't like it, don't eat bro. [*Beğenmiyorsan yeme kardeşim*]. I also put melon on the buffet. They don't like it either. I'm doing them a favor. It's healthy, it's good for them. [...] But our people are cranky. They have to criticize everything. They never leave the space without making comments about how a particular dish wasn't properly cooked, or how that vase does not look good in there. They are insatiable, in-satiable! [*Doyumsuzlar, do-yum-suz-lar!*]

'The melon criticism' also comes up during a conversation with Murat, owner of the French café chain *The Blue Legume* that serves a variety of dishes including English breakfast and Mediterranean breakfast with spicy Turkish sausage *sujuk*. "Do you eat melon for breakfast? I don't" tells Murat, "But they serve it as authentic Turkish breakfast" criticizing similar cornucopian brunch arrangements.

So far I have explored the institution of taskscapes as they take shape around the between the managers, their clientele and the taskscapes of restaurants from the perspective of managers, Underneath both the owners' criticism of each other and the insatiability of customers', there is an authoritative claim about knowing the proper way of doing things, captured in a discourse of authenticity. The statements "This is authentic" or "This is not authentic" do as much to empower the claimant as the holder of a set of skills and knowledge, as to qualify the object according to rules of propriety.

As Appadurai notes, "Authenticity measures the degree to which something is more or less what it ought to be" (1986: 25). But how is this "What it ought to be" is decided when it comes to expectations of Turkish food? Is it instituted in reference to a past encounter? Is it located in Turkey? Are there any spatiotemporal nodes of authenticity that can give it relative stability? Who are the claimants and performers of authenticity? 'What' needs to be authentic? What are the various repertoires of authenticity deployed by Turkish restaurants? In what kind of context do these diverging authenticities meet each other?

**Everything Authentic Melts into Air**

"Good, authentic Turkish food is hard to find. So when it turns up on your doorstep it's cause for celebration" notes Jay Rayner in a review of *FM Mangal*, a Turkish grill restaurant (The Observer 26.08.2012). Ionis Thompson describes the *meze* served at *Ev*, another Turkish restaurant "with an emphasis on the home cooking of Anatolia" as "good but hardly unusual [...] standard mixture of starter dishes found throughout the Middle East" (2014: 24). A Turkish speaking customer in Gallipoli restaurant responds to the waiter, causing later a complaint on his part, asking how her food was: "Very good, but please let the chef know that it wasn't like my mother's".

Londoners' palate, as Londoners, is a mixture marked by seekers of new culinary experiences, people "with foreign cultural backgrounds", including those who have been to Turkey and tasted the authentic in situ. The increasing number of flights and summer holiday packages available to Londoners, contribute to the

construction of an authoritative knowledge (i.e. as tasted in Turkey) and familiarity with Turkish cuisine, adding it to the pool of diversity of London foodscape. “London houses more than 70 kinds of regional/national restaurants” notes Karaosmanoglu (2013, p.375). Bell and Valentine argue in reference to various authors that London is one of the world cities that enunciate and “trade on the diversity of food and eating experiences on offer” ((1997) 2006, p.140).

The above comments summarising three distinct requests are nodal statements that illustrate the tensions of a cosmopolitan city of London where Turkish restaurants are operating. There is a variety of clientele with authoritative claims to what constitutes good, standard, authentic and homely. The foodie, the international eater who has travelled to Turkey and tasted the *authentic* in situ, the displaced and insatiable customer comparing it to motherly domestic cooking, the reviewer who expects both familiarity – so that it can be categorized as one culinary group, but also difference, -so it can distinguish itself within the market, are all the constitutive consumers of the London foodscape that the Turkish restaurants contribute.

Such context also interferes with the boundaries of what constitutes a ‘Turkish’ restaurant and what culinary traditions are served as Turkish. In the following section, I will elaborate on the difficulty of framing ‘Turkish’ culinary repertoires. In a setting where food is not necessarily cooked or prepared by Turkish speaking staff, and the restaurant takes pride in serving Londoner audience where specifically does the Turkish’ness of a Turkish restaurant shift?

As "sites where ideas about identity and culture are produced, symbolised, communicated and performed in sensual and local as well as symbolic and global ways" (Karaosmanoglu, 2013b: 371) I will be exploring how the Turkish speaking restaurants are holding on to the concept of authenticity, even when the authenticity loses any sort of guiding value in reference 'to what something ought to be'. Among others Appadurai reminds us that expecting or applying authenticity, a term with connotations of an objective reality, to culinary systems is a pointless act, as trying to standardise what something 'ought to be' cannot account for the constant evolutionary transformations food, ways of eating and cultures go through. The authenticity is however of interest to this research as it is a recurrent qualification that appears in menus, or in restaurant titles. By its very existence, and yet in the absence of a pattern of referring, the authenticity is of interest to this research for what it does as part of the à la Turca foodscapes in London. As it will be elaborated further in the chapter, the flexibility and eclecticism of the ways with which Turkish restaurants choose to deploy authenticity and the way they perform it makes it on the one hand *non-performative*, and on the other shows that non-performative has a performative effect, re-framing authenticities, that are diasporic, as a skillful acts of dwelling, rather than in reference to an objective criteria placed elsewhere or as a performance staged only for the cosmo-multicultural consumer or for the co-ethnic. Diasporic authenticities are therefore functional in that they recover the taskscape in reference to the activities of managers and owners enacted in their situ of dwelling, based on their authorial choices.

**Authentic as Audience Oriented**

A descriptive piece in *Olay Gazete* titled "Istanbul delight in London" [14] on *Istanbul Meze Mangal Restaurant* states "*Istanbul Meze Mangal* caters to a clientele with a foreign cultural background that has a developed taste, besides the members of the community" The manager Emrah Sağlam claims serving "a taste and service that suit Istanbul". Further on in the article he says, "Based on years long experience in the sector, we are bringing Anatolian taste with a touch of Istanbul breeze to Colliers Wood [...] We succeeded in becoming a point of attraction especially for the English who visited Turkey as a tourist, besides the local community in the area" (*Olay*, 22 November 2013, p.3). The same issue of the newspaper also features an article on Üstün Lahmacun[15], stating that the managers claim serving all traditional pastries, and sorts of lahmacun. [...] Managers who say that the lahmacun and pides are prepared by master hands, pride in serving a taste of lahmacun that is suitable to Londoners' palate" (*Olay* 22 November 2013, p.10).

In these instances, the managers in the articles focus on the diverse audiences that their restaurants have the potential to please. While Ustun Lahmacun sees no distinction among their audiences and qualifies their clientele as London-dweller,

[14] "*Londra'da Istanbul Keyfi.* [...] *Istanbul Meze Mangal Restaurant, toplum üyelerinin yanısıra yabancı kültür kökenli damak zevki gelişmiş farklı bir müşteri portföyü de bulunuyor.* [...] *Istanbul'a yakışan bir lezzet ve servis*. [...] *Sektörde yılların tecrübesiyle Anadolu damak zevkini Istanbul esintisiyle Colliers Wood'a taşıyoruz.* [...] *Lezzet arayan bölge sakinlerinin yanısıra özellikle Türkiye'de turist olarak bulunmuş İngilizler için de çekim alanı yaratmayı başardık*"

[15] "*Firmanın menejeri, müşterileri için Anadolu'nun geleneksel tüm pide, börek, gözleme ve lahmacun çeşitlerini servis ettiklerini ifade ederek* [...] *Lahmacun ve pidelerin usta ellerce hazırlandığını belirten menejerler, Londralıların damak zevkine uygun lahmacun lezzetini sunmanın gururunu yaşadıklarını söylediler."*

Emrah sees a distinction between "the members of the community" and the foreigners who had to develop a taste for Turkish cuisine. In the same account however, Emrah also recognises that it is based on years long experience, in London that a negotiation took place between the two tastes. This negotiation for Ustun Lahmacun involves including 9 pizza dishes in a menu of 59 varieties of pizza, pide and lahmacuns, among other dishes. The vegetarian options are marked by the images of little green peppers with the letter "v" inside. Every pide is described at length and there is even an option for Tuna pide. The tradition that the master hands serve at Ustun Lahmacun, flirts with the closest neighbors, the pizza, while proliferating the possibilities of pides, responding to the vegetarian palates of London. To appeal to those who are 'outside of the community', pide is marked as Turkish pizza, playing with a certain familiarity for the audience, and yet distinguishing its different technique of preparation and serving as Turkish.

**Authentic as Experience**

Part of a "renaissance in dining out", a transformation of the eating out as a leisurely activity rather than a mere satisfaction of hunger, "an activity pursued for itself or in itself" (Wood quoted in Bell and Valentine, (1997) 2006, p.131), the polyculinary London offers 'world in a plate' as a possibility of seeking not just new tastes but also new experiences (ibid., p.125-143). Furthermore, as Deborah Lupton writes about western societies at the end of the twentieth century, "[I]n the context of an abundance of food, the search for new taste sensations and eating experiences is considered a means of improving oneself, adding 'value' and a sense of excitement to life" (1996, p.126).

Mem & Laz Group booklet available at their restaurants in Theberton Street says: "At *Mem & Laz* we love special occasions and our key focus is to make your evening unforgettable. Be it a quiet candle lit dinner, belly dancing with our waiters or even dancing on the table cheered on by your guests, our mission is to deliver a memorable dining experience". Onder with his chain *Tas and Haz* targets such cosmopolitan clientele seeking not just the food but also the experience of "the authentic in situ", with the "atmosphere" he creates in his "Authentic Anatolian Turkish Restaurant". "We are an ethnic restaurant" he says. Playing Anatolian music and folk songs and the decorative elements such as kilim carpets and Seljuq[16] symbolism as well as figures of whirling dervishes and pictures of Ataturk, the founder of the Turkish Republic are seen as part of an Anatolian heritage that is replicated to provide a holistic experience of eating out in his Hazev branch. "Food is not about filling your stomach, it is a matter of culture. It is a complete experience. [...] Welcoming, hosting and waving good bye are part of this [authentic] experience. This is also specific to us." Onder says, resonating with the widely held perception of Turkish people as hospitable.

Even though Onder makes claim to the status of ethnic restaurant as a genre of serving food in London foodscape, he does not perceive 'Turkish' as an ethnic category to the exclusion of Kurdish for instance. Turkish, according to him designates those belonging to the current Republic of Turkey found by Ataturk in 1923, on loosely defined Anatolian land, marked by the traces of many

[16] Seljuq Dynasty ruled between 11th and 14th centuries in the majority of the region that is currently described as the Central Asia and Middle East. As part of pre-Ottoman Turkish history, Seljuq dynasty is cherished for its rich culture incorporating elements from Sunni Islam, ethnic Turks originating from Central Asia and Persian culture.

civilizations and cultures such as Seljuqs. "If we say Turks, we would do injustice [to the Anatolian richness]. Turks are nomadic, they don't know fish for instance. If we say Mediterranean basin, that is better I think. It includes everywhere from Agean part to the Black Sea, from Eastern Anatolia to Thrace." He explains his preference of Seljuqs' heritage over Ottomans' as "Ottomans always looked to the West. I like Seljuqs better. They invested in Anatolia. Ottomans built all their palaces to Istanbul"[17].

The eclecticism and flexibility deployed by Onder in the decoration of *Hazev*, drawing elements thematically from different civilizations that have lived or influenced Anatolia, is similar to *Ishtar* restaurant's claim to "Modern Authentic Turkish cuisine". The webpage of the restaurant notes: "Ishtar was the ancient 'Sumero-babylonian' goddess of fertility, love and light and this is reflected in our food. We would like to welcome you with great ambience. *Ishtar* serves modern and traditional Turkish food"[18]. Drawing their inspiration from prehistoric Mesopotamia (Southern Iraq), yet claiming a modernized Turkish cuisine while holding on to the courtly Ottoman dishes as traditional, and all performed with the tag of authenticity, *Ishtar* is one among many Turkish restaurants deploying elements of Turkish'ness eclectically, drawing from different themes and historical periods. Furthermore, it shows that the themes and historical periods chosen for aesthetic and *mise en scene* arrangements do not always correspond to simple delineations of culinary repertoires.

[17] Onder is preparing to open a culinary school next year to which "chefs from India, Pakistan, Iran, Lebanon and from other 'Eastern countries' [*diğer doğu ülkelerinden*] will come to teach East's culinary tradition [*doğu'nun yemek geleneği*]". He is the only one among the chefs I interviewed using the terminology of East as a regional cluster to the inclusion of India and Pakistan. Most managers deploy losely defined clusters of Middle East and Mediterranean.
[18] http://www.ishtarrestaurant.com/index.php

**Serving 'Turkish' cuisine**

Such performances of Turkish'ness relying on different civilisations on the one hand displays the troubles of nation-states as containers of cultural spatio-temporalisations, and further highlights what Bell and Valentine conceptualize as "the contradiction of food-nationalism equation":

> [...] there is no essential *national* food; the food which we think of as characterising a particular place always tells stories of movement and mixing, as 'deconstruction' of individual food histories [...] If, as Benedict Anderson (1983) has famously proclaimed, the nation is an 'imagined community', then the nation's diet is a feast of imagined commensality.
>
> (2006: 169)

In his article on Turkish Cuisine, Sami Zubaida similarly notes:

> National cuisine, like all things 'national' are products of modernity and the imagination of the nation. [...] National(ist) histories and myths drive this imagination into constructed genealogies, extending culture deep into history and origins. In relation to Turkey this history brings in the glories of the Ottoman as a near ancestry and the people of the Steppes as ancestors. In fact, food in Turkey, like in other complex societies, is one of diverse regions and origins, and much recent innovation.
>
> (2014:22)

Turkish restaurateurs in London regularly deploy a culinary belonging to also imagined regions of Middle East or Mediterranean to denote the variety they serve, at times made as juxtaposition to other nationally framed culinary repertoires, and others just as part of the larger Middle Eastern repertoire. *Gallipoli* restaurants and *Kilis* claim serving Turkish and Lebanese cuisines in their websites. *Time Out* lists Turkish restaurant *Mangal* as offering Middle Eastern food.[19] On the *Visit London* website, a similar search with the keyword 'Middle Eastern' results in a list of Turkish restaurants among which are *Angora* (1st in rank) *Efes* 2, *Efe's*, *Durum*[20]. *Devran Restaurant*'s menu notes: "Our stews are made using traditional recipes from a wide range of regions in Turkey to give you the widest variety of Mediterranean taste" (*Devran* Menu). While *Devran* perceives Turkish cuisine as capable of fulfilling the widest Mediterranean variety, *Mem & Laz* Group brochure defines *Mem & Laz Brasserie* as "A Mediterranean restaurant based on Turkish cuisine" keeping the sense of a difference or a variety that Turkish cuisine has yet to offer as distinct from others.

The regional areas covered by contemporary and past Turkeys –Ottoman & Republic of Turkey- therefore affords such claims based on geographical and historical affinities with Middle East and Mediterranean regions (Zubaida 2011, 2014). According to Fragner, the Ottoman tradition still affects a large area of culinary activities, creating "a macro-region that consists of micro-regions, each characterised by local traditions of cuisine" ([1994] 2011: 53).

[19] http://www.timeout.com/london/food-and-drink/londons-top-50-restaurants-middle-eastern
[20] http://www.visitlondon.com/things-to-do/activities/food-and-drink/restaurant/middle-eastern

Including The Balkans, Greece, Anatolia and Fertile crescent, these nationally segregated localities of today, Fragner says, carry the joint stamp of "Ottoman culinary Empire" that is "[...] often based on regional or local cuisine from various parts of the empire, but homogenously shaped by the prestigious and refined taste of fashionable urban dandies in the vicinity of the Saray" (Ibid.: 52). Most managers and owners deploy the layers of this culinary heritage. They are also cognisant of the fact that an authentic Turkish cuisine, as attributed to the nation state of Turkey would be difficult to sustain. While their deployment of these regional belonging is also mainly guided by the concern that if the same repertoire is served as Turkish food, it will not be known, thus will not attract cliente (Karaosmanoglu 2013), and their awareness of a fixed culinary repertoire that could serve as the standard of authenticity, however, does not stop them from using the vocabulary of authentic Turkish food.

The survival of the claim of authenticity within this setting of eclecticism and regional claims, with the variety of culinary tradition valued over purity, is a response to the London foodscape, an attempt to negotiate processes of familiarisation and differentiation simultaneously. Karaosmanoglu notes such claims to Ottoman culinary heritages mark the identity claims as cosmopolitan, as opposed to having an ethno-national basis (2013), and furthermore are guided by appealing to larger clientele. Downplaying Turkishness is a concern mainly for the early restaurateurs of the 1990s. The lack of familiarity with Turkey as a country goes hand in hand with a lack of familiarity of its culinary richness. Metin (chef) says:

> Before no one knew what Turkish cuisine was. Still today Turkish cuisine is not that distinct from Greek cuisine in London. But when you put Ottoman, they know about it. They might not know about the food. But they know the empire. Today it is different of course. Everyone goes on holiday to Turkey. They know more about it. They taste it. Of course it is not exactly the same food. But now we can sell it as Turkish cuisine. But we say Anatolian or Middle Eastern. Because then you cover a greater area.

Claimed as a regional hybrid, the authenticity still does not serve as a framing tool, one that would guide the clientele, and suggest at least a consistent repertoire chosen among this variety, that is borrowed from Ottoman or Mediterranean repertoire and temporarily fixed for London Turkish restaurants. In other words, there is little commonality in the ways restaurants claim the tag authentic, the way they curate the dishes and the varieties of serving. Therefore, authenticity itself appears as another site where creative and inconsistent juxtapositions appear as instances of flexible interpretations, breaking a uniformity of practice that can be homogeneously expected from the cluster of Turkish speaking restaurants.

It is, for example, common for the menus to include dishes such as pastas and pizzas, widely consumed in Turkey but not claimed as specialities of Turkish origin. English Breakfast is also widely available in cafés and restaurants serving breakfast, alongside Mediterranean or Aegean breakfast options with cheese, olives, tomatoes and cucumbers served with Turkish bread.

Modifying Turkish styles of cooking with the addition of ingredients that are highly consumed in London such as bacon or cheddar cheese are also common. Menemen containing bacon or pide with cheddar cheese are such examples. Humus is ubiquitous not only in supermarket shelves in London, but also in every Turkish restaurant including take-aways, a popularity that it did not yet reach in Turkey in terms of commercially available, ready-made forms.

The menus and practices also play with the order of serving particular dishes or ingredients: olives conventionally a breakfast item, become a starter dish while a mixture of mezes, main dishes and desserts (cacik, melon, pides, baklava, etc.) appear together on the specifically set for the weekend brunch stands. Similarly Turkish Cacik leaves its 'origins' as a thin, drink-like side dish consumed with spoon to become a starter made with thick, strained yoghurt approaching its neighbor among the mezzes, *Haydari* and is easily consumed with a fork. *Iskender*, a distinct way of serving *döner* kebab on a bed of bread crumbles, seasoned with tomato sauce and plenty of butter, regularly appears as a dish of lamb or chicken cubes, or even kofta served with tomato sauce. Garlic sauce or chilli sauce are still foreign to many Turkish arriving to London for the first time in the ways they are made and served in all kebab take-aways, yet taken for granted garnish for most Londoners. If the authentic is experience based, and this experience includes décor, taste and the way a food is served, Turkish restaurants are creatively proliferating the options.

**Changing Modalities of Eating Out Establishments**

These curative approaches to Turkish cuisine juxtapose the inclusion of many "foreign" but "local" ingredients, and modification of ways of doing or serving that diverge from conventions still practiced in national Turkey but sometimes fitted with claims of belonging and affinity with the imagined Middle East or Mediterranean. This dynamism is replicated in the flexibility with which categories of eating out places (and the modalities that come with them) are deployed in naming the places. For instance, *Ocakbaşı,* meaning "around the fire" refers to a seating arrangement around an open fire place, the barbecue where the meat is cooked[21]. *Ocakbaşı* restaurants serve only few mezes but a variety of diced or minced lamb kebabs. Alcohol (beer, raki and now increasingly wine), *şalgam* and *ayran* accompany the dinners that last long hours and the conversation is held with a background noise of the chopping of onions and tomatoes. The music is either absent or played very softly. In London, most *Ocakbaşı* are loyal to open barbecue seating arrangement and the exhibit of chopping the onions and placing the Adana kebab on the skewers. The *Ocakbaşıs* major modification appears in the menus that are enriched with an abundance of vegetable dishes, salads and even pides and lahmacuns. The drinks include world beers and many spirits including Raki, with few Turkish wines taking their place in the wine list. It is also common for menus to have a "Vegetarian" section, almost an 'oxymoron' to a modality that is marked by meat. The loud music that plays in the background in *Cirrik,* for example, and the speed with which the food is consumed in both *Cirrik* and *Umut Ocakbasi*, provide experiences of

[21] For a detailed analysis of bloggers' accounts of their sensual experiences in *Ocakbaşı* restaurants in London see Karaosmanoglu, 2014.

rather a generic grill restaurant (*mangal*) experience. Interchangeably used categories of *Mangal*, grill, *ocakbaşı,* and BBQ lose their distinctiveness as a modality of serving food as almost all Turkish restaurants serve kebaps and they serve what all other restaurants serve, with a similar rhythm and mode of consumption. While many restaurants provide a take-away option, the kebab and fish & chip take-aways still keep a sense of distinctness marked by their small front of the house arrangements, opening hours, and their emphasis on speed of serving customised food that is rarely for in-house consumption. The category of "*pide and lahmacun ovens"* further lose their claim to specialization. *Lahmacun* places serve many other Turkish dishes and *pides* and *lahmacun* are incorporated to the majority of the menus, mostly referred to as Turkish pizzas. Similarly, it is not only the specialist fish restaurant that provides the fish, meze and raki, but they appear as disconnected items on various restaurants' menus. Sea bass features on the same page as a chicken casserole and they both neighbour sirloin steak and iskender kebab. Such juxtapositions of meals and entanglements of modalities of eating out render obsolete the conventional taxonomies deployed to suggest distinct specializations, availabilities, spatial and atmospheric arrangements that can be captured by authenticity that can be framed in reference to a London authenticity.

**Making The Maker of the Authentic**

An advertisement for Indian Ready Meals published in the in-house magazine of *Sainsbury*'s (1995) states:

> "It takes a special kind of person to make an authentic Indian meal. An authentic Indian. That's why, at Sainsbury's, we didn't ask any Tom, Dick or Harry to make our Indian Ready Meals. We asked Akbar, Nizar and Zeenat. People know their poppadoms from their cardamoms. Their tamarind from their turmeric. And their fenugreek from their jaggery." (Quoted in Bell and Valentine, (1997) 2006: 177).

*Sainsbury'*s advertisement that commodifies authenticity is significant, as it suggests that the culinary authenticity is a function of the maker of the dish and can be achieved only when both the maker and the meal share a common heritage. We don't know who Akbar, Nizar or Zeenat are, but we are expected to assume that they are not only the owners of the authentic culinary heritage but also that they have the necessary cooking skills. The two however do not always go together. In the Foreword of his book *The Complete Book of Curries* (1966), Harvey Day writes: "All who run restaurants where curries are offered to a gullible public are not experts in their native art and the result some achieve on their patrons is a revulsion to curries of every sort. These restaurateurs haven't mastered their art, use only the cheapest ingredients, and are out primarily to make a fast buck" (Day 1966: 11 quoted in Bell and Valentine, (1997) 2006: 175).

Day's foreword and the rest of the volume are problematic and offensive on many levels. As Bell and Valentine note, one problem among others is, in the rest of the volume Day gives recipes of 'authentic' curries "though these often bear the stamp of colonial interests, with recipes for dishes like corned-beef bhurta and the common use ingredients such as Worcestershire sauce" (175). What's noteworthy in Day's Foreword, however, is a recognition of the culinary skills as an art that can be learnt, developed and performed to perfection rather than being the innate cultural capital of the native, unlike Sainsbury's advertisement suggests. As an Englishman, perceiving himself entitled to giving advice about authentic and proper curry, he attributes the authenticity to the improvable process of making, rather than to the maker.

The Turkish culinary repertoire claimed as 'authentic' in London, similarly distances itself from the mastery of a culinary repertoire as an automatism that is engraved in the body from Turkey. It is rather acquired and developed in the specific location of the UK, accommodating cooking skills associated with various nationally claimed restaurants and also non-Turkish chefs. These skills and repertoires are constantly shared and transferred among the chefs[22] and also passed on to the "curious" or "talented" initially employed as commis, to wash the dishes or as serving staff.

[22] Though few establishments take pride in "working with the same chef for twenty years", in majority of them the chefs and staff move between institutions. The entrepreuneurs also have mobile partnerships in ownership and management. All managers I interviewed mention that everyone 'copies' each other and take pride if a dish or a decorative element is copied elsewhere or if someone they trained start their own business. This sets the stage of authenticity as a place of contamination alongside claims of individual agency.

It is a dynamic curation that is shaped by and in return shaping the London foodscape, rather than a static skill set carried along from 'back home' or one that comes with being native.

The question remains: Why and how the claim to authenticity still survives in this setting as a possibility of providing "as made in Turkey"? Where the maker is flexibly non-Turkish, the making is a transferable skill learned in situ of dwelling marked with an abundance of ingredient availability sourced from various parts of the world[23], what does a claim of authenticity do for Turkish restaurants?. "Authentic" as a potential performance of "as made in Turkey" is pragmatically driven argument to attract a particular clientele, who is on the demand side of the relationship of authenticity, deploying a similar commodification as Sainsbury's advertisement. The Turkish restaurants' claim to authenticity speaks to the adventurous eater or British family who has been to Marmaris[24]. But how is it able to sustain itself, when the constellation of Turkish restaurants serving such variety under the rubric authentic do not even correspond to each other?

[23] There are over thirty wholesale, cash & carry and döner making companies based in London, run by Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriots sourcing various ingredients including meat, fresh fruits, dried fruits and nuts, dairy products and drinks. Turkish water, tea, wine and teas, with their original brands are sourced from Turkey either through official distibutors or import companies based in UK, while fresh produce, dried fruits and spices are sourced from many parts of the world, alongside Turkey, depending on price and seasonal availabilities. Due to the EU regulations banning the import of dairy and meat products from outside of EU, these products are sourced from companies with mix ownership based in Germany, Netherlands, Denmark, including sujuk, spiced Turkish sausage. Meat with halal certificate is mainly sourced from Wales, Scotland and Ireland and daily fresh milk is bought from English suppliers.

[24] Popular tourist destinations in Turkey (i.e. Efes, Bodrum, Antalya, Marmaris, Istanbul, etc.) widely give their names to restaurants as a managerial attempt to appeal to familiarity.

**Culinary Repertoires Further Spread**

The numbers of Turkish speaking restaurants stated by Karaosmanoglu (2013) do not take into account the invisible entrepreneurs, the Turkish and Kurdish-run Greek, Italian, French, Spanish, Mexican and Thai restaurants or ethnically unmarked, mostly breakfast cafés and though lower in numbers, British pubs. Establishments that claim to serve Turkish food, but are owned and run by non-Turkish speaking staff further complicate these calculations. In 2013, a kebap shop owned by indigineous British chef Matthew Morgan in Cumbria, *The Alternative Takeaway*, won the Best Kebab business award after being nominated by the town's MP, Rory Stewart.[25] The winner of The Best Fine Dine restaurant category in the 2014 awards is *Sheesh*, a Turkish restaurant in Chigwell run by a British family in the historical *Ye Olde Kings Head* public house dating back to 16th century[26]. Ibrahim Dogus says that there are more and more Asians, Chinese and British in the kebab business, especially as take-aways owing to the advantages of small business ownership, both in London and in UK.

Similarly, it is common for Turkish-run Italian, Mexican and French restaurants to employ Turkish/Kurdish/Cypriot chefs who acquired the necessary skills for cooking these nationally framed repertoires for ease of working together.

[25] http://www.newsandstar.co.uk/news/business/cumbrian-takeaway-named-best-kebab-shop-in-britain-1.1029926 and British Kebab Magazine, Issue 1, January 2014, 13.
[26] http://britishkebabawards.co.uk/2014/01/15/the-winner-of-the-2nd-british-kebab-awards/ and http://sheeshrestaurant.co.uk/history

Can, owner of *La Divina Italian Cafe and Restaurant*, explains that he prefers to work with Turkish chefs rather than Italian chefs, in his Italian restaurant, as they leave for seasonal jobs in Italy which leaves the establishment without a chef over a long period of time. Can says,

> Never say never, but I don't think I'll ever employ an Italian chef again. [...] They work with their brains, not with their bodies. If I say to my Turkish chef, do this like that, he would just do it. He would trust my knowledge and experience. But Italians talk back all the time.

While Can prefers to work with Turkish chefs who will be able to cook Italian pizza, he has no longer any professional interest in serving Turkish food. Turkish food requires lengthy labor to treat the meat or the vegetables and creates large amounts of waste[27], troubles you do not need to go through if you serve pizza. Can says:

> You use everything for pizza. The vegetable and meat waste is minimal. You mix the flour you bought with tab water and there you are! The packaging waste that is left behind is minimal. You also just pay the "owen chef" (*Firin ustasi*) and serving staff. It makes so much sense to open an Italian restaurant. Boil the pasta, serve it. Turkish cuisine is not like that, is it?

[27] Many managers mention how expensive the waste management is for a Turkish restaurant. The garbage needs to be disposed in special bags that the establishments buy from the council. Each extra bag means an extra cost for the restaurant.

> It requires treatment. And most dishes have lengthy preparation times, so you need to prepare them in advance. Peel the vegetables, marinate the meat. But when they are not consumed the same day, you can't serve it the next day. It happens, sometimes people just don't show up. Then, you need to chuck it away. So the next day, you make everything fresh again. You lose a lot of money and time.

Managers and owners who transition to other cuisines share similar reasons, based on convenience of serving particular cuisines and low cost management. These transitions are further fueled by the entrepreneurs' perception that the managerial and hospitality skills, once acquired, can be transferrable among establishments, independent of the culinary heritages they serve. Chef-managers further take pride in the transferrability of their cooking skills (Can, Murat, Metin2), moving among the repertoires of French, Greek, Spanish cuisines.

The inclusion of dishes associated with Turkish cuisine in the menus of chain restaurants such as *Giraffe* taking pride in serving world food (i.e. Turkish *pide*) or in the supermarket magazines (Waitrose, *gozleme)* is a further proof of how 'Turkish' food exceeds the boundaries of an ethnic performance, while the mobility of the Turkish-Speaking entrepreuneurs to the management of other ethnic restaurants show that the taskscapes enacted by Turkish-entrepreuneurs exceed the performance of a nationally marked culinary heritage.

**Diasporic Authenticities**

Finding a location of/for authenticity and attempts to assign authority of its judgment and practice to various claimants have been the major concerns of discussions of authenticity. In a widely quoted paragraph Appadurai expresses the difficulty of locating the authority as follows:

> "Authenticity measures the degree to which something is more or less what it *ought* to be. It is thus a norm of some sort. But is it an immanent norm, emerging somehow from the cuisine itself? Or is it an external norm, reflecting some imposed gastronomic standard? If it is an immanenet norm, who is its authoritative voice: The professional cook? The average consumer? The gourmand? The housewife? If it is an imposed norm, who is its privileged voice: the connoisseur of exotic food? The tourist? The ordinary participants in a neighboring cuisine? The cultivated eater from a distant one? (1986, p.25).

Molz comments that "Appadurai believes the term should not be applied to culinary systems at all, because it cannot account for the inevitable evolution that occurs in cultures and their cuisines" and his "rejection of the term authenticity lies in his perception that it connotes an *objective* reality" (p.54-55). Following scholars who see authenticity "as subjective or emergent quality that is constructed and negotiated within a social context" (Moscardo and Pearce 1986; Evans-Pritchard 1987; Cohen 1988; Lu and Fine 1995; Edensor 1998; quoted in

Molz, p. 55), and deploying MacCannell's (1973) concept of "staged authenticity" deriving from Erving Goffman's (1959) study of social performance, Molz provides an account of "the Thai restaurant, a representative enclave of Thai culture within the United States" (p.56). Leo Pang on the other hand, in his study of the Chinese restaurants in Sydney, argues a co-presence of multiple authenticities. He notes "all the voices that Appadurai mentions –from the tourist to the ordinary participant- are authoritative voices when it comes to authenticity" and concludes that an economically motivated "balance between catering to the notions of authenticity held by Chinese and Caucasian clientele" also changed Sydney's (Chinese) foodscape. While Molz looks at the authentic as an emergent *quality* Pang's empowering of various voices as "multiple authenticities" reminds us that authenticity is a claim, rather than a purely defined, set criteria. As tradition, authenticity is a "powerful 'invented' discourse in the presentation and representation of food and national or local cultures" (Bell and Valentine 177). As a discursive framework with its corresponding performance, it is responsive to and constitutive of the foodscapes where it is taking place.

**Authentic as non-performative**

I suggest that authenticity still requires attention in such settings where it is ubiquitously claimed and where such ubiquity cannot even suggest patterns that relate to experience, maker or culinary repertoire. What deserves emphasis, is the functioning of the relational space between the claimants, the claimed and ways of claiming as performative, despite the term's non-performativity.

Based on Austin's description of performative utterance, as the statement "that does what it says" (1975 in Ahmed 2012, p.116), Sara Ahmed defines non-performative as the act that does *not* what it says (p.116-117). Butler suggests: "Performativity must be understood not as a singular or deliberate 'act', but, rather, as reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names" (1993, p.2). For Ahmed, in reference to Butler, the "non-performatives describe the 'reiterative and citational practice by which discourse' *does not produce* 'the effects that it names'" (Butler 1993, p.2 in Ahmed 2012, p.117, Emphasis original). Authenticity itself therefore is non-performative across the Turkish restaurants. Culinary authentic is almost always contextual in the absence of more or less fixed geographical or historical reference points that would constitute the standard for a dish, or for the deployed repertoires. What makes Turkish restaurants' non-performative authenticity significant is the fact that authenticity is an almost empty signifier, losing attachment to any suggestive value. However as Austin makes it clear, for a statement to be performative, or as Ahmed reminds us, to be non-performative, it has to be uttered by an authoritative agent. I argue therefore, in line with Ahmed's suggestion of "introducing non-performative for performative effect" (2012, p.117) the Turkish speaking restaurants engagement with their foodscapes create diasporic authenticities; authenticities that make claim to this possibility of spreading.

This authoritative claim to authenticity and the eclectic and flexible curations and practices that are clustered under the authentic, and the possibility of tagging the authentic to so many myriad and distinct from each other ways to the effect of non-performative, is the effect of diasporic authenticities.

‘Diasporic’ here refers to the sense of having the qualities of dispersing, scattering in their authoritative voice, rather than referring to a perceived as unified and static, displaced diaspora culture. ‘Diasporic authenticities’ are more concerned about what performatively diverging claims of various restaurants achieve as a general statement, than the individual restaurants’ success of fitting to the expectations of non-performative authenticity. It does not denote just the individual, autonomous voices of managers and owners. But it refers to the entirety of the taskscape instituted by the constellation of these establishments. The concept aims to account for not just the strategies of adapting, modifying ways of cooking and serving food or arranging eating out spaces, but to the myriad curative frameworks with which authenticity is confidently claimed across Turkish restaurants.

**Reflecting on a Journey to Find Turkish Restaurant**

Full of mysteries and a dynamism that would make any researcher be wary of any definitive statements, the Turkish restaurant scene in London is a matter of accidents and contingencies as much as it is a matter of managerial choices.

This chapter is mainly based on the accounts of the managers, as a tactic to give voice to the migrant entrepreuneur and his/her managerial decisions in light of the extended ethnographic encounters with the sites. When asked about my research if I said “on Turkish food”, more for reasons of brevity than dismissiveness, a smile would follow a geographical delineation of my site, phrased as a rhetorical question: “Dalston, Hackney, Green Lanes?”.

While these neighborhoods densely populated by the Turkish and Kurdish restaurants also host the majority of Turkish themed food establishments, the Turkish Speaking Community's culinary entrepreneurial activity that takes either of the forms of owning, managing, cooking or serving at an eating out place exceeds the confines of these neighborhoods. If focused on these establishments, one would possibly replicate the ethno-minority business model researches and generalise one model of being involved in some sort of ethnic/migrant food economy, that almost looks like a closed-circuit, to the rest of the city. Instead, I chose to start at what passes as the centre of city, with a curiosity about the Turkish restaurants that were in mixed and transitional areas of the city as opposed to predominantly Turkish neighborhoods. Looking beyond the confines of pre-dominantly Turkish speaking ghettos only partially resolved the problem of *where* to start. The bigger question was: What is a Turkish restaurant? What makes one? What were the boundaries of what I was about to explore?

Throughout the years long fieldwork and writing process, I struggled with these questions that mutated their resonances. What makes a restaurant Turkish was initially a way of phrasing curiosity over which markers of Turkishness were on display at Turkish restaurants in London, hoping to come up with answers to the curatorial strategies and managerial choices of the restaurateurs. To this aim, I started the journey looking for the restaurants that openly suggested serving Turkish dishes, mostly with Turkish names or names that suggested a geographical affinity with the contemporary Turkey (*Ishtar*). Names of restaurants is not a good enough indicator to have a sense of the entirety of variety. It is non-deceptively suggestive of the presence of a Turkish manager, if

not chef; but what is not named as Turkish is still part of the same foodscape. This non-Turkish naming, non-geographical naming creates a space of intentional invisibility, more directed at the customer than the co-ethnics with whom one has business or family relationships. Unless one looks carefully, it is easy to miss the contribution of these to dwelling practices through food. Such intentional visibility becomes most obvious when it comes to (non) naming of cafes (See Ray 2016 p.39-49).

Thus, following contacts and suggestions, as well as giving way to the coincidental encounters in the streets of London, very soon the field extended itself to cafes, with no overt claim to Turkishness yet serving dishes such as *menemen,* almost exclusively suggesting a Turkish or Kurdish intervention to the menu. This soon created a rupture between the framing of a restaurant and serving of dishes that are Turkish. I had to re-think my initial question: Was I after the Turkish food or the restaurant framed as Turkish? The categories proliferated as I kept looking, adding to the picture complications of Turkish-run establishments that had claims to other national cuisines (i.e. Italian, Mexican, French, etc.) or restaurants run by non-Turkish, as Turkish restaurants. I, on the one hand wanted to preserve an analytical simplicity, but on the other, the field was speaking to me with such variety that I felt I had to listen to this complexity, rather than imposing categories of understanding by a desire to detect patterns, which would inevitably deploy an ethno-national lens and possibly will not go further than replicating findings on ethno-minority business models. I thus chose to give in to the complexity of locating the Turkish restaurant, and rather listen to the deeper argument it made, with a broader look at the larger constellation these eating out arrangements made together, a foodscape à la Turca.

This on the one hand complicated the acts of denoting migrant or ethnic restaurant, on the other "the immigrant restaurateurs in a global city" as Ray uses in the title of the second chapter of his book *The Ethnic Restaurateur* (2016, p.31). More importantly, even though one starts with these problematic analytic concepts, where one arrives at the dissolution of these terms, is what we need to shift our theoretical gaze as they show the home-making practices of Turkish speaking people in myriad ways.

The relational space between common stigmatization of Turkish customers as "difficult" and the preference of Turkish in the recruitment strategies of Turkish restaurateurs is a claim to the authority of distinguishing between the elements of a community understood as a unified enclave. In the interviews economic profit, easeness of work marked by the staff respecting their authority and discipline are regular reasons stated for employing people from Turkey, Bulgaria or Nepal.[28] suggest, their choice of business partners or recruitment of waiters and chefs is guided by economic profit. Though some mention that speaking Turkish is helpful, Can reminds that "Even if you are Turkish and if you speak Turkish, you need awful a lot of training, especially to serve Turkish food. It would take you at least a month to learn the name of the dishes, get a sense of the restaurant and to learn the names of the people." Similarly, flexible recalling of Middle Eastern or Mediterranean, imagining a national specificity eased and marked by the

[28] Ozkan explains his reason for choosing a Nepali waiter because "he is so pliable" [*mülayim*]. Engin says he employs people "who knows how to behave". Onder's claim is the only one carrying a hint of altruism or favoritism. He says if he has an option to choose between two people, if they are equal, he would choose the one from Turkey, because "They need more help. Bulgarians or Polish can work anywhere here, they don't need a work visa. The other one need support." The way the preference is worded suggests paternalistic protectionism of the one in need by the affluent, rather than an ethnic favoritism.

myriad civilizations of Anatolia including the prehistoric ones, is also a claim about standing where one wants, not where one is assigned. Read along with the arguments around the continuity of improvement or modification of dishes for various reasons is part of a life time of any culinary heritage, locked and tried to be understood as a static formation. The flexibility of using ingredients proper or widely available in UK, altering the dishes based on local taste, is also part and parcel of changing diets of Turkish communities. “Our people don’t go to Italian or Chinese” says Onder. They go to a Turkish restaurant”. This however does not signal a preference to Turkish food as many Turkish restaurants cater to a variety of diets and preferences, including dishes that are associated with other cuisines. Do you really need to go to a Italian restaurant when you can go to a Turkish restaurant that serves both Italian food and Turkish pizzas?

Subject to and constitutive of London restaurant culture, the managers and serving staff’s perception of Turkish customers as “difficult” due to a breach of hospitable contractual relationship they envisage for their establishments also shows that the specific rules of hospitality is shaped as a function of their location, the form their establishment takes and the time and efficiency requirement of the clientele they have the habit of serving (i.e. professionals coming for lunch). The failure of queuing properly or the request for modification of the menu are unwelcomed behavioral excesses that are not proper to Turkish, but to any encounter where the customer comes with a different set of rules of hospitality (including the unwanted tourist).

The cornucopia of the brunches or long menus catering to all dietary and personal preferences as an act of commercial pragmatism, carry also an argument of omnipotence. “We came with nothing” (Onder) to “I can cook anything” (Metin) or “I travel to taste new foods all the time” (Ozkan) are proud statements of survival and professionalization in a highly competitive sector. Such professionalization is also reflected in the increasing number of culinary schools opened and run by these entrepreneurs.

**Social Capital Re-rooted**

Katila and Wahlbeck’s comparative research on the Chinese and Turkish restaurant businesses in Finland notes the importance of both transnational and local social capital during the start-up process but also to keep the business running. From the initial fund raising to the recruitment of chefs and serving staff, or fulfilling the constant paperwork requirements, the migrant communities rely on their social networks in gathering the monetary backing, skills and linguistic resources needed. Whether it is in Finland where Turkish and Kurdish migration is much more recent and more scattered compared to densely and readily available networks of London, the Turkish and Kurdish entrepreuneurs deploy and constitute a social capital mobilised around food activities. As I demonstrate above, the use of social capital does not necessarily imply an exclusive co-ethnic mobilisation of resources. Recruitment strategies, meaning gathering the taskforce for the day to day operations of a restaurant are based on complex calculations of experience, proficiency in English but more importantly having a potential to learn and adapt to the specific demands of the restaurant.

This shows above all, the restaurateurs' faith and deployment of taskscapes as they are shaped along the micro (i.e. their eating out establishment) or macro (i.e. London) foodscapes.

Krishnendu Ray, based on his research on Indian Restaurants in Manhattan similarly points out the importance of within group nodes of communication and notes that "all decisions are deeply embedded in social relations with co-ethnics". Ray, however, discards all possibility of autonomous decision-making and suggests that the fact that the managerial decisions "*appear* as isolated and individualized is an artifact of the interview process" (Emphasis added, 2016 p.32). It would be hard to argue that any managerial decision can ever be isolated and individualised, especially in the case of the catering business. Ray's account, however, overemphasises the social capital of the migrant group over how the individual choices might actually define the route of the navigation among this social network and with this social capital. This research argues, on the other hand, that the managers' emphasis on the individual decision making processes needs to be listened to with a keen ear, as it suggests a willingness to be recognised for their personal success and not just as part or representative of a particular group. This is particularly reflected in the interviews with restaurant owners who own places in Central London or the café owners (Engin, Serkan). Even though a social capital is available, the distance established between this hides a proximity claim to the local customer –defined as Londoner, a way of belonging that denies migrancy and allocates it to an imaginary Turkish speaking migrant who is thought to dwell at the North of London. The establishments in the North however, do not feel bound by the rules of co-ethnic social and cultural

capitals either. Similar menus aiming to appeal to a variety of clientele, appear in the vicinity of similarly mixed modalities of eating.

The social capital, even the one that is co-ethnically qualified, is actually built through sectoral ties and professional and geographical proximities. Neighbour establishments catering alongside each other in the same street might share members of staff in times of need, or ask each other for change when they run out. These are not decided on the basis of finding the next closest Turkish speaking establishment, but based on the familiarity that has been established over time, in their place of dwelling as a restaurant.

Manager to manager information is also shared in regards to where to source the best ingredients, cheaper and more conveniently. Among the wholesale companies, those who have access to specialty products such as yoghurt and Turkish cheese (also sold as Bulgarian cheese or feta) are preferred, only if they are able to cater a large group of products. As the owner of Gemma, a wholesale company importing spices, confectionary and household items from various countries including Turkey and India dramatically expresses:

> Everything is available in London these days and there is great competition. If your product is not good, if your price is not good, you would not buy it even if the supplier is your brother [*Ürün kötü oldu mu, fiyat kötü oldu mu, babanın oğlu olsa almazsın o tedarikçiden*].

Co-ownership or management of the restaurants does not necessarily follow a pattern of prior acquaintance or family ties either. Two investors who would like to share the risk and workload form partnerships, though in these cases referral would be a decisive factor. These partnerships are different than family business model partnerships where the kin functions as a cement to the economic bond, despite the challenges of working together with the family. These professionally brought together friends or acquaintances, usually express their decision to break the partnership based on their managerial preferences (Onder, Serkan).

Therefore, the relationship with the co-ethnics is rarely smooth, nor it is given. These are built over time and complicated in the case of the London, by the variety of regional, ethnic, political differences among the Turkish speaking people as well as professional ones that are acquired in situ. These professional choices are furthermore expressed in reference to authorial preferences.

**Autonomy of the manager vs. social capital**

Among the Turkish chefs, the narrative of individual success is mixed with a modest dissociation from the rest of the community, from 'nothing' to chain restaurant owner). Huseyin Ozer is one extreme example of dissociation from social capital and adoption of an autonamous life story and marketing it as part of his celebrity chef persona. It is only after he establishes himself as a star that he goes back to a recognition of Turkishness. (Extreme Turkishness). Huseyin Ozer's narrative rests on a tense platform of claiming authorial voice through innovation within a sector of ethnic cuisine, one that capitalises on the performance of heritage of another location (Interview, also see Karaosmanoglu 2013).

A Turkish saying goes, “Every hero eats the yoghurt differently” [*Her yiğidin yoğurt yiyişi farklıdır.*] The performance of difference within the London foodscape is welcomed and even demanded, but only if it carries a touch of familiarity. Performing so widely the authenticity itself, deploying familiarities (i.e. presenting one’s repertoire regionally as Mediterranean, or Middle Eastern food) but also distinctive touches to dishes (i.e. *Hazev* names certain dishes and set menus with the name of the Chefs) emphasizing agency and entrepreneurial choices, is a statement of potency. The liberty to diverge, to treat a cultural capital as one wishes, is the position of the confident. The diasporic authenticities do not just lie in the mobility of foodways and people, but in the spreading of authenticities themselves with such confidence.

## Chapter Three

## Ordering Kebab, Redefining the Nation

Imagined foods feed imagined nations. Contingencies, movement of goods and people, changing climates and economic relations, all are contributing factors to these imaginations in their material and symbolic manifestations, transgressing both the legally established, visa-protected borders and the mental imageries that accompany. The culinary presence of the diaspora (the presence of the culinary other) further disrupts the homogeneity of the culinary nation. The presence of diaspora food, diaspora authenticities show that while the difference of cuisine is more easily accepted when elsewhere and as part of a culinary touristic quest, at home or while travelling, some cuisines are more readily accepted, digested than others. The mobilities of food and values attributed, hence, are not challenges that are "packed and carried to the new *home* in the luggage of the migrant", but are constituted in situ, with the participation of agents, both multiple, and as will be shown in the following chapter, multi-cultural. How are these locally-created *in situ* repertoires incorporated into the discourses of national imaginations? How does the diaspora participate in the imaginations of the nation through their food practices? Can group organized food events establish a sense of compatibility and provide a comprehensible order for the diasporic authenticities? How does the nation taste? Can Britain taste like kebab?

Following Benedict Anderson's recognition of nation-states as socio-historical constructs that come to being as an effect of discursive reiterations of unified history, language and commonality of experience by means of media, educational systems and re-framing of cultural productions ([1983] 1991); I will elaborate on kebab's framing in everyday life, in media and in legal documents.

Building upon the earlier chapter where I discuss the mobilities and creative ways in which social and cultural capitals are deployed, this chapter further illustrates how food can be a puissant performative tool of re-ordering. I will then expand on the possibilities of imagining the nation from within, as inclusive of the (migrant) other by giving voice to the British Kebab Awards' re-positioning and re-framing of a food item.

**"*Your fucking kebab is shit!*"**

4th of August 2013. Thousands of Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriots fans make their way out of Emirates stadium, after a game between Arsenal and the Istanbul based Turkish team, Galatasaray. The score is 1-2, the result of the result being that Galatasaray takes the Emirates cup *home*, leaving behind some of the Galatasaray fans living in London with mixed feelings; some support Arsenal as much as they support Galatasaray. Many of these supporters were seated in the Arsenal stand during the game as it was easier to purchase the tickets in London through the connection with the hosting-team, some others already had season tickets to the game[29]. The parade of fans is on its way to the tube station with a slow, but steady walk, when a man starts yelling repetitively from a pub's patio towards the crowd:

[29] The mixed feelings of the team supporters in diaspora is most exposed when the teams they support from the country of origin, in this case an Istanbul team, face the teams they support in the place of dwelling, London. Extended research in this area would further explore the multiplicity of belongings and the parameters of this divided attachment to teams. On this particular day, if the fans were put to the soccer version of the cricket test, as suggested by Enoch Powell, it would surely yield mixed results.

*Your fucking kebab is shit!*

*Your fucking kebab is shit!*

*Your fucking kebab is shit!*

Clearly an Arsenal fan, disappointed with the score and angry, his body is like an arrow ready to leave the bow and his mouth is like a water cannon spitting, both saliva and these words. I scan and smell the crowd to see if anyone's having a kebab, wondering what might have triggered this specific utterance.

The kebab is materially absent, as far as I can sense, though it is clearly present in its association with the marching crowd of Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish-Cypriot people. "*Your* fucking kebab is shit!" yells the man, attributing the full ownership of it to the marching crowd, emphasizing 'your' as puissantly as 'shit'.

While the Arsenal fan channels his resentment over the game's loss through fecal imagery attributed to the body of the other, with a rather intense verbal and bodily language, I'm searching my own body for signs of anger, disappointment, or offense. I don't feel much. After all, I'm not that much of a meat or kebab eater, I wouldn't know how to prepare one anyway and I don't earn my bread with it (though I obviously culturally capitalize on that). Confident about the legitimacy and sources of my own dissociation from kebab, I still do not understand the nonchalance of the crowd. I, like the yelling man, assume the crowd to have a connection to kebab. Isn't kebab one of the main sources of income for Turkish and Kurdish people? Even if they don't work at a kebab shop necessarily, some must at least eat it once in a while. I expect the crowd to engage with this aggressive statement. Don't they feel at least a bit threatened?

Yet, no one says or does anything, no one seems to take offense. The reaction – or lack of reaction- of the crowd seems as intriguing as the guest appearance of kebab in *dirty* language[30], if not more. It is still early stages of my fieldwork and I can't make sense of this non-encounter. Why is the aggression not met with either a verbal or physical response? I see the occasional heads turning to the yelling body, though briefly. These minor acknowledgements are proof that I'm not imagining it all. I'm puzzled though and ignore the intricacies of the associations and dissociations with kebab. Is this apathy? Did they develop a thick skin because such insults happen regularly? Or is this an instance of Turkish and Kurdish people valuing fair play and gentlemanly behavior over their community and national pride? Does such a pride exist? Maybe it is the behavior of a migrant group that wants to keep a low profile in order that they might be accepted? Or, is it because they feel safe enough and at home, not to take this insult seriously?[31]

Agonized by these questions with the still rhythmic, aggressive, monotonically repetitive "Your fucking kebab is shit" yelled at the dramatically visible marching crowd, I turn around and ask Adnan, the acquaintance with whom I watched the game: "Doesn't it bother you? Doesn't it offend you?" He is Kurdish, from Turkey, and has been living in London for over twenty-five years.

[30] Though Turkish and Kurdish people do not face regular and systemic racist attacks, partially due to their invisibility as will be elaborated later in the chapter, it is not uncommon for kebab to appear with pejorative connotations in political rhetoric to denote the "otherness" of rival MPs (SNP MP attacked on the grounds of being a kebab eater) or as the food of the uncivilized hours after pub closing time (http://www.hellou.co.uk/2015/11/guy-tweets-about-what-makes-a-british-kebab-so-special-nails-it-70052/ )

[31] In her article on belonging and politics of belonging, referring to Michael Ignatieff's work on human rights (2001), Yuval-Davis notes the connection between feeling 'safe' and feeling 'at home' as affective components of belonging (2006, p. 197).

"It's not me who is going to eat kebab tonight, it's him. I'll have my dinner at home" ("*Akşama kebabı ben mi yiyeceğim sanki, o yiyecek! Ben yemeğimi yiyeceğim evimde".)* he replies dismissively. Another man from the crowd who overheard us jokingly says: "He'll probably be so drunk by that time that he won't even remember that he had one". Both of these statements are based on the very likely scenario that the man (who seems at that very moment to despise the kebab and whomever is associated with it), gets hungry after few hours of drinking at the pub and stops at one of the many late night kebab shops in London; if not for its taste, for the convenience. A pre-cooked chicken or lamb *döner*, upon demand, will be sliced in thin layers and wrapped within minutes in *pide*, with a mixture of salad and sauce of choice (garlic or chilli sauce); comforting a post-drinking stomach with a carb load, in an affordable and speedy fashion.

This singular instance surely cannot be generalized as an exhaustive summary of relations between Turkish and Kurdish communities, and their *hosts*, but provides a point of entry, through the questions it raises, to the complexity of layers of (not) belonging, expressed around associations and dissociations with a culinary item. My intention is to highlight the parameters of discursive detachment from kebab by multiple parties, whether because it is the shitty food of the other or the drunk lad's food; in a setting where the every day bodily and economic engagements are more inclusive of kebab than this encounter suggests. British Kebab Awards, a yearly sectoral event initiated but not limited to the kebab caterers of Turkish or Kurdish origin, aims at bringing relative legibility and order to such asymmetry.

An awards ceremony instituted around the economic practices surrounding an ethnically associated culinary item, bends and breaks mental and affective boundaries, managing both "belongings" and "the politics of belonging" through a domestication of kebab; and claims it to be at home, in Britain.

In what follows, I will briefly describe the discourses of dirt and unhealthy food surrounding the generic term 'kebab' with its take away and drunk lad's food associations and analyze the dynamics of kebab's disownment by multiple parties as displayed in this particular encounter with 'kebab-speech' in the streets. From an everyday encounter I will then move to a group-organized annual food event, the British Kebab Awards Ceremony, as a collective moment of sectoral, social and political occasion that tactfully responds to these perceptions, taking into account multiple audiences; combining a multi-faceted micro, meso and macro level engagement with the politics of food and food of the nation.

I will specifically look at the ways in which the British Kebab Awards Ceremony and related media aim to address and distort imagery constituted around the take-away kebab culture by means of changing the focus of values and actors associated with it, with the ultimate goal of reclaiming kebab as British. I will argue that the BKA has mutually dependent normative and affective impacts: on the one hand it orders kebab, as widely enjoyed and made in Britain, by categorizing its current manifestations; on the other it affectively attunes the provisioning communities –with or without a background of migrancy- around a pride that is instituted, not through a glorious past, but in the here and now of hard working contributions to the British economy.

I will conclude by discussing the ways in which these acts of re-nationalizing kebab constitute also a specific performance of a multicultural British nation, one that knows itself as one, but one that is also proudly composed of many parts, that do not necessarily need to settle for a standardized or unitary belonging.

Kebab's re-rooting in British soil through a sectoral event, displays the multilayered civil projects that are enacted by non-state actors, as micropolitical projects that push the limits of the discursive boundaries set by macro structures, but also converse with them, through the very means of everyday practices. Such projects are not only inspired by the material and symbolic mobilities of food, but also show how these mobilities can contribute to nation-making and nations in making.

**Contextualizing Kebab: Floating Signifier**

Kebab is a generic term used to denote a variety of dishes, techniques and ways of serving, mostly referring to meat-based versions, encompassing stews, skewers and one of the common denominators being the presence of meat. It is associated with the cultures and people of the Middle East and South Asia and is assumed to have travelled to Europe and Britain with the migrant waves of the 1960s. Today, there are take out places, street stands or restaurants that sell *a* version of kebab in almost every major European city. Metropolitan hubs such as London and Berlin are particularly "lucky" in their access to the variety of methods and ingredients that almost constitute the full repertoire of kebab, owing mostly to their residential composition including the multiple communities associated with its different traditions.

London has furthermore a distinct eating out and take away culture that contributed to the flourishing of kebab in different forms of outlets: be it in one of the take away shops, fine dine restaurants spread around the city or through online food delivery systems such as Just Eat or Deliveroo, kebab finds all kinds of opportunities to express itself in ways that deny easy categorization, to suit the palates of various socio-economic groups, on different occasions.

The variety of dishes, ingredients and even techniques that pass as kebab is worth scrutiny as this richness of culinary tradition that carries the centuries long impact of various geographies and cultures, and the respective "transformations, mutations, discontinuities and syntheses" (Zubaida 1994) appear chaotic and the term is deprived of a unitary genealogy or valid global imagery that would allow a straightforward historicization or apparent framework of analysis.
Genealogical attempts asking about the "difficult, maybe impossible to ascertain" origins of kebab are "pointless" according to Zubaida.

> When it comes to kebab, it is pointless to ask about origins. Meat grilled over an open fire is common to all people who hunted animals and knew fire. Kebab requires additional skills: butchery, meat cutting and boning. Evidence of the butchering of meat appears in pictures on Assyrian clay tablets. Although these skills surely developed separately in many places, the style of different meats arranged on skewers and grilled on an open fire has long been identified with the Middle East. The diversity of local and regional types subsumed under the generic term "kebab" reflects this commonality of culture.
>
> (*Mediterranean* 1994)

Zubaida furthermore investigates the etymological roots of the word and its use in various contexts and resources, mainly Arabic and Persian ones, only to conclude that "the etymological evidence throws no light whatsoever on the matter of the origin of the culinary dish called kebab" (ibid.). If not the origins, the etymological inquiry sheds light on the floating nature of kebab as a signifier: a vague, unspecifiable (Chandler (2002) 2007, p.78-80), almost inconsistently rich concept, kebab might denote a cooking *technique* (i.e. turning over), cooking *medium* (i.e. open fire), cooking *tools* (i.e. skewers), main *ingredient* (i.e. meat) and give little or no hints about the accompaniments, form or aesthetics of the plate[32].

While historical, genealogical and etymological inquiries fail at fixing what kebab may once have signified or what it signifies today, the flourishing popular cookbook literature on kebab furthermore displays the variety of contemporary appropriative frameworks. Alongside nationally located (i.e. *Kebabs of India*), regionally allocated (i.e. *75 Simple Middle Eastern Recipes: Deliciously Quick and Easy Dishes from Kebabs to Couscous*) or ethno-nationally claimed (i.e. *Turkish Kebabs*) nominal arrangements, occasion and cooking technique based classifications (i.e. *Kebab for Grill*) as well as the health and nutritional value-based titles (i.e. *Kebab Recipes for Diabetes: Healthy Diet on a Skewer*) proliferate the connotative abilities of kebab as a signifier[33].

[32] For the details of etymological analysis, see Zubaida, "Kebab" *Mediterraneans,* 6, 1994.
[33] A thorough analysis of cookbooks where kebab features and their nominal strategies exceed the agenda of this present study. The different titles and agendas of discursively and practically locating kebab is worth further scrutiny to grasp the contemporary livelihood and historical moves of kebab, and would be one way of tracing the "floats". –floats?

Such abundance of indicative possibilities does not yield to easy ethno-national delineations, nor temporal ones; but goes hand in hand with a multiplicity of forms, combinations and techniques that are performed contemporaneously, be it across geographies or even in a single city. Within this scenery of almost indiscriminate referential associations, though floating, kebab gains, maintains and displays its indicative potential contextually through its material and bodily manifestations. The sights, smells, occasions, modes of eating, accompaniments, hence an imaginary and practice of kebab are circumstantially produced and provide frameworks of recognition. As a floating signifier, kebab means different things to different people; a concerted understanding is conditionally established, through repeated exposure and association to ways, *praxis* that constitute kebab, in situ. While its object (i.e. a specific dish) or action (i.e. cooking technique) referents are promiscuous in the UK, as elsewhere, the dominant value-ridden health and community resonances need to be postulated prior to analysing the *fixing*[34] of this floating signifier by means of ceremony.

**Whose shit is this? The Drunken Lad and the Migrant Other**

Within this abundance of associative possibilities given the variety of material manifestations of kebab in hubs such as London and Berlin especially, the dominant symbolism of kebab revolves around the cheaper and more easily accessible take away versions that are consumed mostly after a night out. A beef or chicken meatloaf rotating in front of an electrical heat source (more traditionally open fire) -*döner* or the Adana kebabs, minced meats on skewers -

much less spicier versions than one would find in the origin city of Adana- are wrapped in thin flat breads or squeezed in pita bread, alongside the accompaniments such as lettuce, black cabbage, pickles and Chilli or garlic sauce. Depending on the availabilities of space, the take away kebab outlet can offer seating and serve to the tables, but most of them provide food that one can consume even standing or walking, without needing cutlery. It is a highly individualised fast consumption food. The hungry customer chooses every item that goes in the final product on spot. It is also a rapidly served food, though the preparation of the meatloaf and the minced meat can take days depending on whether they are bought in ready-made form from manufacturers that are in Germany or Britain; or whether they are made in house. There are only minor differences from shop to shop in terms of their selection of meat and the condiments. Most kebab take aways offer a personalised and extremely efficient service. The staff located between the cooking grills and the refrigerated counter with a transparent glass serves the customers with an almost mechanic quality. Take away shops, unlike restaurants, are not the places to linger, especially in busy lunch or after drink hours. One is guaranteed to get a much more individualised product compared to the kebab fixed in the menu of a restaurant. One first chooses the kind of meat (i.e. Adana, lamb shish, chicken shish, chicken or beef *döner*) and the bread (i.e. wrap or pitta). Depending on how busy the shop is, the staff members behind the glass refrigerator take the following customers' orders while the meat of the first customer is being cooked. If the customer asked for a *döner,* the process is even faster. Within usually less than a minute, the meat of choice is placed in the bread of choice, and the customer is expected to say which condiments will go in the final product.

Onions, lettuce, grated carrots, thinly sliced black cabbage, pickles are on display in separate containers. “Chilli or garlic sauce?” is the question that announces the end of the individualised preparation and the beginning of a consumption that requires much more skill than it is given credit for. The kebab shares a styrofoam box with the fries, if they are part of a meal or one ordered them in extra. In these cases plastic forks are offered. If one ordered only the kebab, it is generally wrapped in paper though, usually leaving the tip of the kebab open, so one can start savouring immediately. The temporary neat look of the kebab tucked in paper gets rather messy soon after one starts taking bites: chilli or garlic sauce starts dripping from the bottom, pieces of salad, pickles or meat fall off the bread container now softened by the juices and almost inevitably, at one point or another one comes into direct tactile contact with the food. It is not impossible, yet requires much training to prevent stains on one’s clothes and shoes by predicting the next point where the kebab will get loose, and one will tilt the head to catch the falling pieces before they reach the floor. Deprived of the distance and neatness that a table, cutlery or plates would secure, kebab eating can look rather messy depending on the skills and familiarity of the eater.

Beyond the scattered aesthetics of a kebab in a pitta or the inevitably saucy and tactile eating process in its take away versions, the messy-ness of the kebab is further sustained by the images surrounding its main consumers. Kebab is also thought to be predominantly consumed by the drunk after a night out. (Quotes from Kebab magazines & videos). Associations with the later hours of the night, drinking and disorderly behavior that run across media outlets sustain the messiness of kebab consumption.

The Hook Magazine's webpage, promising to provide "A fresh take on pop culture" with 5 million Facebook followers, is one among many platforms where kebab and related stories make regular and almost caricatural appearance. In an entry from 2014, the magazine lists the "8 Drunk Lad Personas":

> There are two types of guy – the standard issue man and the drunken lad. As the drunken persona slowly starts to take over, the shackles are loosened and men will ultimately turn into one of the following. If you think that the drunk you isn't one of these characters then you're in denial – the truth we speak.

Third on the list of non-standard, drunken lad personas is "The Gorger". Followed by the image of a young man eating what looks like chicken wings, with red sauce all over his face and his fingers, the entry notes:

> Gorgers are an honest breed of drunken lad. After a few beers all they can think about is a twelve inch pizza served with a delicate side of oily kebab meat, mega chunky chips and cheese, and a gallon of mayonnaise. As long as The Gorger is fed dutifully then he will remain an honest lad, the only difference being the chili sauce that dribbles from his chin down his chest.
>
> **Favourite Move:** *The Snatchy Man* – Whilst suffering the torture of waiting for his feed The Gorger will grab at his mates chips and take a bite of their burger our of pure boozy desperation.[35]

[35] http://www.thehookmag.com/2014/05/drunk-lad-1-7234/

In another entry the webpage shares a video depicting a scene of conflict at a take away shop between a female customer and a female member of staff. The article entitled "Girl Takes a Shovel To the Head in Takeaway" notes "Like all good stories the scene of drama appears to be a chippy or kebab shop of some kind"[36]. In the video attached to the piece, it is not clear whether this is specifically a kebab take away or not, but the likelihood that is established by the editorial framing is both reflective and constitutive of the kebab take away shops as the place of conflict, drama and disorderly behavior.

Though most kebab shops serve "vegetarian kebabs" typically comprising of skewed peppers and aubergines, halloumi or falafel wraps, a concession made to host London's drunk vegetarians, "having a kebab" predominantly refers to meat consumption. Consequently, the kebab shop is not imagined to be the frequent and normal lieu of consumption for the vegetarians. It is mostly the place where the vegetarian occasionally falls out of the habit. In a more recent post, this time non-anonymous author Sarah Hulyer notes "We have nothing against vegetarians here at The Hook, live and let eat is our motto –but there's something about that one friend who is 'vegetarian' but always eats a kebab at 2AM that is particularly hilarious"[37]. Despite the author claiming to have nothing against vegetarians, a slip of behavior if not character by the not-so-devoted vegetarian, breaches what might be an ethical, religious or cultural dietary regime by means of consuming kebab. If there is no judgment passed on vegetarianism itself, the breach itself is "hilarious", and by means of kebab, once again the order of things has been compromised.

[36] http://www.thehookmag.com/2014/08/girl-hilariously-takes-shovel-head-takeaway-14388/
[37] http://www.thehookmag.com/2016/11/vegetarian-totally-loses-eating-meat-first-time-22-years-110848/

The provocative and sensational language of The Hook is surely part of a particular genre of web *journalism* the purpose of which is not necessarily to inform, but to entertain through sarcasm and exaggeration, and with little attention paid to the accuracy of connections established between the events and their effects. Similar pejorative associations however survive and are sustained across media, in reference to scientific research and reports published by authoritative agencies.

One such highly mediatized survey has been conducted and published in 2009[38] by Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS -now known as Local Government Association -LGA)[39]. LACORS' "Council survey on doner kebabs –UK wide" comprised of 494 samples collected by 76 individual councils and has been one of the main resources of the recent associations with dirt and unhealthy qualities of kebab, drawing upon findings on the adulteration of meat, labeling mismatches and its nutritional values[40]. The BBC News webpage covered the report with the title "Study reveals 'shocking'

[38] http://www.ihsti.com/lacors/ContentDetails.aspx?id=21724

[39] Renamed in 2016, I will keep referring to the report as LACORS report, as this is how it is known among the kebab caterers and how it appears in media outlets referencing it. LGA (formerly LACORS) is the local government central body responsible for overseeing local authority regulatory and related services in the UK. Assisted "by a network of local authority advisers and recognised experts", the LGA aims at promoting "quality regulation, development of policy and dissemination of comprehensive advice, guidance and good practice for local authority regulatory services". Regulatory services "is the name given to a group of services which exist to protect the public. Local Government Regulation coordinates the regulatory services delivered by local government. These range from protecting consumers against illegal door stop selling to checking hygiene standards in restaurants and food factories". The LGA distributes reports, advice and guidance through its official website and "via e-mail bulletins to heads of service and specialist officers". http://www.ihsti.com/lacors/static.aspx?N=0&Ne=0+2000+3000+4000+5000+6000+7000+8000+9000+10000+11000&groupid=1

[40] Last retrieved from http://www.ihsti.com/lacors/ContentDetails.aspx?id=21724 on 07.11.2016.

kebabs" [41] with an emphasis on the caloric values and high salt content, while some other media outlets chose titles as alarming as "Doner kebabs: Death wrapped in pitta bread". The author Lester Hanes recommends that those "with a penchant for the traditional post piss-up English delicacy of doner kebab might do well to keep a defibrillator to hand" given the results of "doner dragnet".[42] LACORS further published reports on the microbiological safety of salads and sauces from kebab shops[43] and leaflets containing 'top tips' on handling and storing salads and sauces[44], in line with its main aim of "protecting the consumers" –in this case by highlighting and providing guidance to minimize the health risks associated with kebab consumption.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) review of local authority sampling data on lamb meat substitution from July to December 2013, has a much more narrow focus -meat adulteration- and creates less of a sense of holistic malevolence of kebab with a mixture of alarming signals from its handling to its high calorific value. "FSA lamb take away survey" looks at a sampling of "307 lamb dishes, such as curries and kebabs, sold from take away outlets [...] for the presence of undeclared species of meat" and also tests dishes with sauces "for undeclared allergens and the unauthorised use of additives"[45].

[41] "Study reveals 'shocking' kebabs" (BBC News, 27.01.2009, last retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7852168.stm on 07.11.2016).
[42] "Doner kebabs: Death wrapped in pitta bread" (27.01.2009, by Lester Hanes, last retrieved from http://www.theregister.co.uk/2009/01/27/doner_kebab_survey/ on 07.11.2016).
[43] "Salads and sauces from kebab shops –report on microbiological safety" (09.03.2009 Last retrieved from http://www.ihsti.com/lacors/ContentDetails.aspx?id=21219 on 07.11.2016).
[44] "Food safety advice leaflet: salads and sauces from kebab shops" (Published 17.03.2009 Last retrieved from http://www.ihsti.com/lacors/ContentDetails.aspx?id=21256 on 07.11.2016).
[45] https://www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/news/2015/13546/fsa-lamb-takeaway-survey

The FSA report published after a series of food scandals, most recently horse meat scandal, is much more concerned about the space between what is declared and what is served; about the breach of a contractual relationship between the customer and the caterer. The emphasis is more on the failures of "handling" and "the non-declared" rather than kebab or any particular dish absolutely failing on all fronts.

> Of the samples tested, 223 (73%) were fully compliant with food legislation, 65 samples (21%) failed because of the presence of non-declared meat, 12 samples (4%) tested positive for the presence of undeclared allergens, including peanut and almonds proteins, and 7 samples (2%) were non-compliant because of the unauthorised use of additives. The samples that tested positive for undeclared meat showed the presence of beef, chicken, and in one sample pork, although not sold as a halal product. Of these samples, 23 had levels of undeclared meat species below 1% which is more likely to indicate poor handling during processing rather than potential adulteration.[46]

**Kebab as the food prepared by the "Other"**

In the UK, the kebab's supply and service are mainly associated with the Middle Eastern migrant communities. Ibrahim Dogus, founder and director of the Centre for Turkey Studies (CEFTUS) and one of the main initiators of the British Kebab Awards, estimates that the Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot communities are the largest provisioning group among these communities, followed by South Asian and other Middle Eastern communities (Interview).

[46] Ibid.

Zubaida notes that meat grills, kebabs and mezze are constant items in Middle Eastern restaurants in London alongside diverse regional foods, served mainly by Lebanese, Iraqi, Arabs and Iranians. (2013, p. 5-6). In the *British Kebab* Magazine, Ibrahim Dogus notes that the first kebab shop dates back to the 1960s, with the outlets proliferating during the 1970s and 80s with the influx of Turkish & Greek Cypriots and Kurdish communities (2016, p. 5).

For the angry fan of the losing team, a UK resident if not a Londoner, to insult the food associated with the fans of the opponent team is to insult not just the other, but the other within. This statement is not intended at just any Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish-Cypriot, as identity categories of elsewhere; but at the bodies who are occupying, at that moment in a rather visible manner, as a crowd, the streets of London. Those are the bodies that live here and now. Those are the bodies that serve kebab. Such associative comment hence implies an acquaintance, if not familiarity, with either kebab and/or the communities that provision it. It is a visual recognition and a verbal distancing from the external element, an element that does not belong to the utterer (i.e. *Your kebab is shit*). But at the same time, it is a recognition of the intimacy of eating the other (i.e. *Your kebab is shit*). As it is the case with literal shit, the symbolic shit implies a visceral contact.

**Kebab for the Turkish, Kurdish & Epistemic Community**

During the initial arrivals of the Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot communities in the 1960s up to the 1990s, catering has been the foot-in-the-door technique upon their arrival, mostly for the possibility of working, without a highly developed professional jargon in a city where there was room for ethnic cuisines, as established in the previous chapter. For the following waves of student arrivals of the1990s and especially the 2000s, working in the catering sector provides the means of improving linguistic skills in contact with the customers, and, in cases of limited work permits[47], the catering sector is particularly tolerant for under the table, informal monetary and hourly arrangements. Furthermore, in kebab shops, cleaning, cooking, preparing, and serving kebab are seen as unskilled tasks that anyone can learn, in short amounts of time rather than careers of even professions. As the kebab sector flourishes over time and becomes a constitutive part of an increasingly popular take-away and delivery culture in London, catering-related businesses and specializations follow. The kebab "industry" in the 2000s implies a transnationally connected, locally consolidated network of fresh food and drink wholesalers, meat manufacturers, and catering equipment companies producing industrial kitchens to napkins and disposable food containers and cutlery. As with any other sector, restaurant business calls upon legal, real estate, insurance and financial-accounting sectors. In a highly digitized contemporary London eating culture where online ratings[48], images and menus

[47] Tier 4 student visa's legal limit for work is 20 hours per week.

[48] Food Standards Agency shares openly the hygiene rating data of all UK eating out and take away establishments, specifying the final date of inspection at http://ratings.food.gov.uk. As it is noted, the ratings are not about the quality of food, but " The food hygiene rating or inspection result given to a business reflects the standards of food hygiene found on the date of inspection or visit by the local authority" (Last retrieved from http://ratings.food.gov.uk on 07.11.2016).

are checked prior to the arrival at the eating out place and are highly influential factors if not decisive in determining "where to eat", interior designers, web page designers, social media assistants and myriad others are as relevant as the builders and electricians to the sector[49].

An exact calculation of kebab's contribution to the economy either in terms of the jobs it provides or sustains, or expressed in monetary terms, seems rather difficult to attain, especially if one considers these inter-sectoral flirtations. According to *British Kebab Magazine,* today, there are over 20,000 kebab outlets in the UK, selling around 2,500 tones of lamb and chicken *döner* a week. The estimates of kebabs sold on a daily basis are as high as 1.3m (*British Kebab,* 2016, p.4). These numbers, though at best approximations, show that it would hardly be possible to give full credit for kebab consumption to the Turkish speaking population, assumed to be around 400,000 people.

Despite the general association of the origins of kebab with Ottoman Middle East, and its current sustainability and regeneration predominantly by the Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot people living in London, kebab falls out of the ethno-minority business model where the members of an ethnically defined community serve an ethnically associated item or service to the members of the same community, if not exclusively, then mainly.

[49] Prior to the British Kebab Awards, the shop owners, especially located in the ethnic enclaves in North London, seem to rely less on the online means of branding and more on the personal relations and word of mouth. While BKA gains increasing media visibility over the years, so does the nominated businesses. Such visibility comes hand in hand with a sense of pride, and is thought to yield to higher income.

The estimates of kebab consumption per week, the ubiquity of its appearance in different sorts of restaurants' menus and the availability of a kebab shop within walking distance of most residential centres almost all over the country, indicate that the kebab is widely *enjoyed* in Britain[50].

**Intimacy of the insult**

This statement, in the absence of the sight of the kebab, but the dramatic presence of the associated crowds, is not an *objective* one. Schechner reminds us that seeing takes place "only at a distance from what is being seen". He furthermore notes: "There is both a logical and a practical difference keeping what is observed separate from the observing instrument (and/or observer). 'Objectivity' can be understood as the desire to keep things at enough distance from the eyes to allow whatever it is to 'take shape' perceptually: to see things 'in perspective,' to 'focus on' them" (Schechner 2001, p.30). "Your kebab is shit" however, is a statement based on the intimacy of at least one, possibly multiple previous encounters; where "the mouth replaces the eyes as the end point of exploring the 'outer' world and relating it to the 'inner' world" (ibid). The encounter is one of "rasaesthetics" as Schechner calls it, "It is not something that happens in front of the spectator, a vision for the eyes, but 'in the gut', an experience that takes place inside the body specifically engaging the enteric nervous system", meaning the gut's brain[51].

50 Even if one refrains from consuming it, no one is immune to the smell and sight of the forms of kebab; or the occasional take away box with the left over salad and pickled peppers in it, with a hint of garlic sauce lying on the streets especially on a Friday or Saturday late night.

51 See *The Second Brain* by Michael D. Gershon (1999), Gershon, et. Al. (1993), Gershon & Erde (1981), and *Gut* by Giulia Enders (2015) for various discussions of the details of the nervous system present in the gut and its effects on mood and health.

The statement is hence a gut reaction, both in its symbolic and literal meanings, as the body of the utterer's statement is based on an act of incorporation, an intimate, from within encounter with the insulted food item. At the instance of its loss of objectivity -as in a loss of (visual) perceptive distance-, starts a multi-sensory experience with the abject object; increasing both the authority and the intimate nature of this insult. Shit is, after all, the most intimate waste: it is what has been inside and through the body. It is the eaten, discharged. It is the incorporated, declared unwanted. As the contact has been visceral, the rejection is also visceral, from the guts. The relationship between the utterer and the kebab, is hence not based on a limited proximity in a given site of happening (i.e. within the same city or country), allowing access to audio-visual clues of what is outside and at observable distance. Shit is what was once in (him) us, what was once (his) ours.

In his article titled "Multiculturalism and the Ungovernable Muslim", Hage discusses the relationship between London bombings by second generation South Asians and assimilation. According to Hage, "To express such strong and destructive feelings towards a place comes from intense and even intimate interaction with it", and not from lack of assimilation. The experience Hage is describing is one of close contact, and not one that institutes itself from a distance (Hage 2011, p.166). An intimacy that is only possible through a commensality, a common point of touch; yet one that is problematic. Along the same lines, the gut reaction is one that institutes itself from proximity, being one and the same with the insulted.

"A matter out of place" (Douglas [1966] 2008), kebab, like its perpetuators, is dirty, unpalatable, indigestible. It is shit, out of the body, unwanted, disgusting. It is a matter of abjection. Kristeva notes that what causes abjection is "what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules". The shit belongs to those who did not respect the borders of nation-states, their body is out of order as much as their food. Kristeva furthermore notes that the impure, the abject, can never be completely expulsed or removed, but constantly threatens to recur, to return, to pollute. (Kristeva, *Powers of Horror,* p.3, 4, 9 quoted in Alison Bashford, *Purity and Pollution,* 2000 (1998) p.124). With each incontinent reiteration of utterance, yelled at almost every single member of the walking crowd, the sentence is directed at the body that disturbs the purity. Against its re-occurrence, the sentence re-occurs, as long as there are passer-bys embodying the impurity.

**Kebab disowned**

As the disorderly, the bad tasting and unhygienic food, the kebab is bastardized: its value and quality denied. The kebab is also rendered 'bastard' in the sense that it is disowned, disappropriated by both its consumers and its makers. The former denies it because it is the dirty and adulterated food of the other and the latter distances themselves because it is the food consumed by the drunk and improperly behaved. It is refused genealogy, a possibility of parenthood by the consumer and the caterer parties who are both complicit in sustaining not only a presence of kebab in the city, but also its parameters of consumption.

The late opening hours of take away kebab outlets are dependent on both the presence of the drunk and hungry, and the people who, to a certain extent, make a commercial choice to serve who, where and when. It is by means of a perceived divide between the consumer and the caterer and a re-configuration of ownership of food that it is possible to veil the complicity in practice and disown kebab. The custody of the kebab is thrown at each other like a ball in this enunciative encounter: "*Your* fucking kebab is shit!" yells the assumed consumer. The caterer silently replies: "It's not mine. You will eat it". In this instance, the mode of expression, the tone is asymmetrical alongside the imagined parameters of ownership. I am not what I eat, but you are what you prepare is the underlying tone of the first act of disownment; while in the latter, I am not what I prepare, but you are how you eat it. In this enunciative divide between the consumer and the preparer, kebab is declared bastard, no matter how complicitly perpetuated by means of moral disapproval.

Kebab consumption, if has a cultural delineation, does not correspond to the ethnic, linguistic, national boundaries of provisioning groups, but one that accompanies its consumption culture that institutes it as a post-drinking food, or 'clubbing food'. The confident refusal to take offence at a street utterance that was clearly intended as one, is based on a renunciation of kebab as a consumption pattern associated with acts of eating, that occur drunk and take place outside of the household. Kebab, in this utterance, is unhomely food, in its take away form, the antithesis of a family meal[52].

[52] The media appearances of kebab shops recurrently display antisocial behavior with its drunk and criminal consumers. Immoral behaviors, though not perpetuated by the sellers of kebab, are associated with their work place.

Its disownment displays the condensed value systems that both parties deploy to distance themselves from the kebab itself. Through a discursive denial of association with the body of the kebab, a distance is furthermore established vis-à-vis the body of the other, in a respective generalized perception of a homogeneous other. While the mass of supporters refuse its custody on the basis of a denial of association with its conditions of eating, the consumer does so on the basis of a dissociation from its cooking. Yet, both the eater and the cooker engage with it in bodily and material ways.

**Kebab the Bastard as a Potential for Framing & Re-ordering**

From above it can be seen that kebab suffers from a crisis of belonging, in a setting where its associations are with dirt, poor work or nutritional values and uncivilized behavior. On the one hand, it creates a cultural intimacy, an epistemic, though asymmetrical, unity by means of consensus over its nutritional weakness, excessive carb and fat contents, mislabeled constituents and the disorderly life styles it is associated with as in long hours of work that keeps one away from family life and the unhomely food of post-drinking late nights. On the other, neither its economic nor its embodied-material presence in the lives of many translates itself to a claim of parenthood. In its utterance, no one belongs to kebab and kebab belongs to no one. It is left without matrimony or patrie; a clear framework that would make legible where it comes from and where it goes.

The kebab's bastard status is hence established first, by the difficulty of ascertaining its historical, cultural and etymological genealogies fixing it to a single ethno-national group, and second, as a result of its disownment by both the consumer and producer groups, due to its associations with dirt, adulteration and disorderly behavior of the drinking culture. Douglas notes "Granted that disorder spoils pattern, it also provides the material of pattern. [...] So disorder by implication is unlimited, no pattern has been realised in it, but its potential for patterning is indefinite" ([1966] 2008, p.117). Its status as bastard bastardness is hence what provides the British Kebab Awards ceremony a fertile ground of values, people and practices that can be re-ordered, re-framed and re-positioned at various levels. It is through an articulation of kebab in ways that are compatible with the *local*, British "principles of patterning" (ibid., p.61) that the BKA micropolitically declare kebab as the food at home, as homely food. If it is temporarily the signifier of difference in the post-game encounter, as a floating one, the BKA suggests a differently imagined "fixing", one that signifies not unity or similarity, but at home'ness.

As Ichijo & Ranta note,

> Despite the advance of globalisation and the spread of multinational food corporations, in recent years there has been an increase in the articulation and promotion of food as national in the private sector. This has in turn helped to construct and reproduce food images, tastes and qualities as belonging to or originating from a particular national setting.
>
> (2016, p.61)

UNESCO recognition of Japanese cuisine, Turkish coffee, and other comestibles as constituting intangible cultural heritage, can be seen as part of a recent trend of attempts to preserve particular culinary items or conventions as part of national heritages. Kebab so far does not have an exclusive territorial branding that suggest a logic of *terroir* or territoriality for its conditions of preparations to be met. Unlike a Scotch whisky that can only be made in Scotland (Ichijo & Ranta 2016, p.74) or Champagne (Champagne Region, France), or Cava (Spain) all denoting different regional and natural requirements, kebab's actualization is possible wherever the kebab maker goes and wherever the ingredients can be gathered. There is no technique, ingredient or a combination of these that enjoy fixity of framing. The term kebab travels across multi-scalar regions as well as the dish itself, in the absence of *a* recipe, within an abundance of recipes and ways of cooking and eating, that establish an intelligibility between the term and the dish by means of performance of kebab, meaning in situ practices that are informed by the earlier modalities, yet are shaped in situ. Kebab's bastard status, lacking a clear geographical and ethnic delineation or being declared as the national dish of a current politically recognized nation, eases its re-appropriation.

It is in response to this image of a chaotic, dirty, bastard kebab discursively disowned by both its consumer and producer cultures that the British Kebab Awards Ceremony comes to its rescue: to reclaim Kebab as British, as produced by the constituents of Turkish, Kurdish, Greek, Middle Eastern, Asian, Irish and English communities and consumed anonymously. Deploying kebab's bastard status, lack of proper genealogy, BKA subverts the meanings and values attached to kebab eating, and subsequently blurs the boundaries of the groups associated with it.

As noted by Ichijo & Ranta in reference to Rae Oum's research on Korean-American meal organization and inclusion of hybrid foods (2005) "specific food items can be manipulated and utilised to create new meanings and values and to redefine group membership and boundaries" (2016, p.45). As Gili's archaeology of Iberian cuisine furthermore reminds us that "'the national dishes' of countries commonly bear the mark of successive waves of migration" (Gili 1963, p.10 quoted in Bell and Valentine 2006, p.113).

Gili notes:

> One wonders what the people of the Iberian peninsula originally ate – for olives and garlic were brought by romans; and saffron, black pepper, nutmeg, lemons, cane sugar, rice and bitter oranges came with the Arab conquerors; the sweet orange was introduced through Portugal from China; while the taste of *garbanzos* (chick peas) came with Carthaginians. And it was not until the discovery of America that Spain, through her, Europe, first enjoyed potato, tomato, pimento and chocolate.
>
> (Ibid.)

Techniques of nationalism similarly operate by instituting a familial solidarity through either the consumption of a particular food item or through the ways in which meals are consumed. The values associated with 'what people do with what kind of edibles' reflect the values of the nation, as invented socialities and traditions; as well as fixing the places of origin and arrival of what would otherwise be culinary mobilities.

Bell and Valentine note in reference to Gili's account of the Spanish food (1965) that "the traces can become all but lost, or incorporated into a hybrid culinary culture which over time comes to be seen as 'traditional'" (Bell and Valentine 2006, p.116).

The Israelisation of falafel and "Humus Wars" between Lebanese & Israeli (Avieli & Grosglik 2013) would be examples of state-assigned "nationality" of food. Claiming the tradition of falafel and hummus, and marketing it as Israeli vis-à-vis its Arab neighbors and within others as well as internationally, is a top-down, governmental management of pride associated with its authorship, to the erasure of any contribution that might be associated with Palestinians [Further Avieli 2016]. UNESCO intangible heritage applications initiated by non-state actors such as business elites invested in the touristic and commercial benefits of such awards, would be another example of fashioning national pride through a declared monopoly over the mastery and *authenticity* of a dish or culinary tradition (Japan, Mexico, Turkish coffee) (West 2016, p.417). Whether state-initiated and embraced by people or initiated by groups and state-supported, such re-framings show that the regions and centuries, layers of actors and events that contributed to the 'coming to being' of a food item, can be silenced; and a dish or a set of culinary habits can be creatively re-localised. These re-localisations matter less in terms of physical cartographic movements, but manipulate symbolic cartographies: they delineate the boundaries of communities one can imagine affinity with, and have furthermore implications on the way people make sense of their political subjectivities and belongings at various scales.

James L. Watson discusses how in Maoist China, a commensality that was forced and coercive through the collectivization of eating in public mess halls, was an attack to the privacy of the family, household and privately owned kitchens. A program of social engineering that valued the national communist family over the nuclear one, established a strict regime of where and when to eat, instituting (forced) commensality (Watson, 2016, p. 308-320).

While the Chinese state-induced design of commensality aimed at changing cultures of eating with the ultimate goal of freeing female labor (whose inclusion in the workforce was a necessary condition of a stronger nation-family); in 1940s Italy, the Futurists were also aiming at redesigning and re-strengthening the nation through what went in the body and how. As Paxson reminds us, the idea that "'food' conveys to 'the body' not only nutrition but also a potential for broader well-being" was taken up in 1820s by Presbyterian minister Sylvester Graham's promotion of "feeding dietary fibre to American people as a means of improving the moral fibre of the nation by curbing immoderate appetites –his Graham Crackers, invented in 1829, could be considered an early 'functional food', thought to have a positive effect on bodily health beyond basic nutrition" (Paxson, 2016, p. 278, in reference to Schwartz, 1986).

All of these examples can be seen as the advantaged, technocrat, commercial or military groups' imposition of specific imaginations, aiming a direct intrusion to and a social engineering of the dynamics of the everyday life; to institute, rejuvenate or regenerate national pride. BKA on the other hand, reverses the hierarchies of intervention: it is the everyday life of the nation that interferes with the epistemologies of the nation. Dwelling comes before building.

While all these planned and engineered interventions respond with a curative agenda, to a diagnosis of weakness, a nation whose well-being has been either already compromised or whose strength needs to be restored to sustain its livelihood; BKA curates what already is part of everyday life, texture of the country to imagine a revised narrative of the nation from within. This explicit statement of belonging corresponds to everyday sociality with and around kebab.

**British Kebab Awards**

7 January 2015. Hotel Park Lane, Westminster. MPs, parliamentary candidates, chefs, solicitors, bankers, real estate agents, catering business owners, electricians, wholesalers, retailers, Just Eat representatives and journalists, among many others, a total of 1008 people[53], are seated at the circular tables of the ball room for the Third British Kebab Awards, having spent a convivial hour mixing informally in the reception room outside the ballroom. The ceremony starts by observing a minute of silence for the loss of Charlie Hebdo journalists, as an act of both solidarity and compassion for their families. The ballroom is so quiet for sixty seconds you could hear a pin drop, until the presenter announces the opening speeches.

Ibrahim Doğuş, the founder of CEFTUS and the Awards is the first to take the stage.

[53] 1200 in 2016 Ceremony.

> "We are celebrating a great British institution -the kebab. The cuisine of this country reflects the changing population over many centuries. Chips, brought by French Huguenots; Curry, brought by Bangladeshis, Pakistanis and Indians; and of course Kebabs, brought by people from across the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean. When he was Foreign Secretary, the late, great Robin Cook suggested that chicken tikka massala was the UK's national dish, a combination of spicy chicken and gravy. But dare I say that the kebab is also a great British institution. Kebabs get a mention in the works of Homer and Aristotle, and for as long as there have been Turks in Britain, there have been kebabs".

The beginning of Doğuş' speech sums up the *raison d'être* and the curatorial strategies of the event. He recognises kebab within a historical continuity of contact with the *Western world* since the time of Homer and Aristotle, and notes the mobility of the culinary through its makers' journeys to Britain. This narrative localizes kebab both as 'always there' point of *visceral touch*, but also one that is re-historicised and made sense of through migratory movements, and finally, very much like other culinary additions, one that is now considered part of the British culinary repertoire.

Recasting kebab as British and as an institution is justified by the citing of the cultural and economic contributions of the kebab business to Britain. Doğuş reminds us, quoting Sami Zubaida and Richard Tapper, that food is a lot more than eating and cooking and that "behind every dish lies a world" as well as power, expressions of identity and ideology. "But" he adds "it's about more than culture. In these harsh economic times, we have to consider the pounds, shillings and pence" (*British Kebab Magazine*). The sum of these units of currency expended on kebab is announced to be £2.2 billion.

Yet, Doğuş states his accountant's unofficial estimates are about £6-7 billion[54]. The estimates would be even higher, if the related sectors were taken into account.

A group organized event, from the choice of the judging panel and the guests to the way the ceremony itself is curated, British Kebab Awards claims a presence, self-worth and visibility for the producers of the kebab, based on the "here and now" of the everyday kebab activity. To celebrate kebab means a shift of the epistemologies of kebab: from the gorger's food to the food of the nation, BKA gives kebab a home by extending the enunciated boundaries of the communities of consumption and production, uniting them around a celebration that gives a message of unity and pride. Furthermore, it gives categorical clarity to the ways in which kebab feeds the nation, on the one hand rendering visible what remains outside the *döner* by the award categories, on the other by means of reiterating the terms of the nation. This re-nationalising of kebab as British is possible through a re-writing of the ethnic, regional and culinary genealogy of kebab, as well as displaying the consumption varieties. BKA thus deploys the on-going nomadism of kebab through cultures, communities and regions, to enlarging the responses associated with both "how do you eat kebab?" and "who prepares kebab?". As such BKA has a gastrodiplomatic function from within; one that is initiated by one diasporic group, and endorsed by other communities, MPs from various parties and media outlets –those with the power of not only discursively defining but implementing the imaginations of the British nation. Unlike previously mentioned top to bottom engineering of comestibles or modes of eating, BKA's challenge lies as the food of the other imagines the nation.

[54] It is not clear whether here Dogus and his accountant hint at the informal side of the sector.

**Beyond Community Awards: Authority of Judgment**

The *British-ness* of the Awards is sustained by the *British-ness* of the judging panel, those invited to the ceremony and the ethnic, linguistic and cultural background of the award winners. BKA is not a community awards ceremony such as Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot Community Achievement Awards[55] whose raison d'être is framed by ethno-linguistic communities' members' achievements to create and sustain intraethnic community pride, to display this success to non-Turkish audiences within the nation and to other diaspora Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriots. In BKA, anyone in Britain can nominate, any kebab business can be nominated and they can be judged by whomever would like to participate to the voting. BKA aims a comprehensive coverage, as an attack to the fixity of the complementary relationship between Middle Eastern, specifically Turkish and Kurdish communities and kebab. Neither the possibility of being awarded and nor the authority of judging are functions of being members of an ethno-linguistic community. The judging panel, that decides the final winners based on the public nominations and votes that are gathered through the Kebab Awards

[55] Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot Community Achievement Awards is organised by Centre for Turkey Studies (CEFTUS) also found by Ibrahim Doguş. An independent and non-partisan civil society organisation based in London, CEFTUS defines its mission on their webpage as building bridges between the UK, Turkey and the regionLast retrieved from http://ceftus.org/about/ on 03.01.2017). Besides the series of talks and forums the Centre hosts mostly in the parliament, it is the catalyst of both the Kebab Awards and Community Achievement Awards. The latter aims to recognise the achievements and contributions of named communities in several categories among which are Community Award for Male/Female Model, leading figures of media, arts and culture, politics, education, science, legal and civil service, as well as Non-Profit Organisations and various spheres of business activities. For more on the Community Achievement Awards please refer to Ceftus' webpage (http://ceftus.org/2015/07/06/turkish-kurdish-and-cypriot-community-achievement-awards-2015/. Last retrieved on 03.01.2017).

webpage and social media accounts, is composed of leading figures of catering sector, MPs from various parties and representatives of law firms. Both the composition of the judging panel and the public voting mechanisms breaks away from the conceived complementarity between the assumed ethnic origins of a food item and the authority of judging its quality. To judge, one needs to know the object to be judged and in cases of food, the judgment mostly requires one of taste among others. BKA indirectly suggests that the taste and knowledge required to judge a food item or a dish, is not given by country of birth or ethnic lineage. This judgment is based on an acquired knowledge of kebab, a familiarity and acquisition of taste that takes place in UK. The title *British* Kebab Awards thus does more than providing a geographical delineation for the event; it announces the nominated and the judging participants and distributes the authority of participation and judgment to those who practice kebab in Britain, no matter what the origins are. Kebab is not presented as an essentialised cultural product, but its judgment requires mastery and knowledge that are local; a mastery that is both constituted by and belongs to those who are participants and enacters of kebab, whether they are at the consuming end or operate somewhere along the provision systems. Hence, it is not about an articulation of cultural difference and the culinary knowledge that is essentially attributed, but of belonging to the here and now of a culinary practice.

The emphasis on the use of English language, not just during the ceremony but also in published material and the Kebab Awards webpage furthermore sustains the event's agenda of a national coverage, beyond the confines of a particular ethno-linguistic community. The kebab is not perceived to be indigenous to

Britain; but it is endogenously shared and manifested. When asked about the use of English as opposed to Turkish, Doğuş almost takes it for granted: "We live here after all, don't we? We make it [kebab] here." ("*Burda yaşıyoruz sonuçta, değil mi? [Kebabı] Burda yapıyoruz.*" Interview with Doğuş). He furthermore sees an opportunity for the earlier generations to aspire to improve their linguistic skills. While the second generation has no linguistic problems, most of the earlier generation that served kebab had to learn the language after they moved to London, through everyday interactions and less through formal schooling. Though it is mentioned by Doğuş in the interview that the majority in the sector are of Turkish, Kurdish or Cypriot origin, such ethnic references are absent from the symbolism surrounding the event.

**Intraethnic Pride to Political Participants**

Though the citizenship status of the Turkish and Kurdish individuals are mixed, some gained citizenship through marriages, others through asylum or many years of economic activity in the country. Some others are staying with an indefinite leave to remain, gained through the Ankara Agreement. While the British citizen Turkish can participate in both the local and general elections, to the decision making processes of the country, those who stay with Ankara Agreement cannot vote in the general elections until they gain citizenship. Dogus notes that, regrettably, voting is low in the community, even among those who are entitled to. "Voting is a great power isn't it? They need to use that power" (Interview). Respectively, the MPs participation is crucial, as for Dogus, the visibility of a constituency functions as a reminder of their electoral power.

This *visibility* during the ceremony extends beyond the condensed visual presence of the members of the Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot communities in the ballroom; it is one that is magnified by the seating arrangements that are previously allocated by the organising committee. MPs and local representatives from various parties are scattered to tables around the ballroom, sitting next to and sharing their food with the restaurateurs, wholesalers, lawyers, and other members of the Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot community. There is a hierarchy of tables, though not too strict, in terms of their proximity to the stage where the opening speeches and the award announcements are later followed by a live band. The tables closest to the stage are a mixture of MPs and the members of the community who enjoy a fame and respect within the community. Towards the back are the tables filled by local representatives mixed with other members of the community, such as researchers, journalists and smaller establishment owners. The hierarchy of seating disappears to a certain extent around the circularity of the tables: equidistant to the center where the food is placed on an elevated rotating plate giving everyone equal access, the tables are also large enough to need each other's assistance whether it is the salt or the drinks located somewhere far on the table, that one desires. This temporary equidistance surely does not guarantee an equidistance to society's resources with the ease with which one can access the *koftas* and *pilav* on those tables. It does however provide a possibility of face to face encounter and exchange with those who have access to political and macro decision making structures, in a setting that quickly becomes an informal occasion. On the one hand, an electorate becomes countable: the electoral and financial impact of the caterers of kebab and the Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot communities is reminded in numerical terms,

visually. On the other, the MPs and local representatives get the chance to fulfill premises of accountability vis-à-vis their constituencies. It is a chance of direct contact and exchange with the representative of the political system, one the community seems to feel at a relative distance. To what extent this yearly temporary contact will translate into accumulative voting behavior is hard to assess. The potential is that such proximity to the political system in a rather direct, human to human contact, eased by the commensality of the table and a sense of visibility, will on the one hand establish a pride of presence; on the other give legibility to the voice of the invisible Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot community. Such invisibility, as argued in the introduction and seen in the domestic and in street food activities, curtails the practice of citizenship rights, though is not an obstacle for members of the community to participate to the sustenance of everyday life activities. To feel genuinely at home though, one needs to feel that s/he is a participant to the imagination of the nation itself, whether through the means of electoral systems or through civil society. Having a say about the future of the country, and being part of what is said about the country is the ultimate sense of at home-ness. Amin suggests that it is only through a genuine equality of participation to the political system and a practice of full citizenship, a multicultural society can succeed to meet its ideals. This implies an empowerment of ethnic, racial, linguistic minority groups and a sense of entitlement to claim the nation and to determine its fate (2002). In a sense, this is a circular project, for the minority groups' sense of empowerment passes through being allowed to imagine themselves as part of the nation and furthermore, imagining nation as it is inclusive of them.

If fragments can imagine and make sense of the nation, as Zubaida suggests in the title of his article (2002), can the nation also make sense of the fragments? Can the nation imagine itself as inclusive of its fragments? More importantly, can the fragments be the catalysts of such imaginations through the food events, rather than the beneficiaries of benevolent state's inclusionary agendas?

**Ceremonial Kebab: Intraethnic Pride to Re-nationalisation**

Wilk argues that ritual is "a repetitive process that links people together in meaningful groups, highlighting and suppressing some similarities and some differences". "A central way that cultures are mediated on the global stage", rituals, Wilk suggests can provide a way out of the confusion created by what Janet Abu-Lughod calls "global babble": "contradictory, confused and alarmist" accounts on globalization and culture[56].

British Kebab Awards ceremony, though not fully ritualized in its re-occurrence and organization of the event, provides a similar attempt at ordering reality within an abundance of mostly negative associations by forging "particular kinds of connections that make new forms of articulation between cultures possible. By transgressing cultural boundaries, they reform those very boundaries in new ways that we are just becoming capable of perceiving" (Ibid., p.3).

[56] Wilk, Richard. "Rituals of Difference and Identity: Connecting the Global and the Local". Presented to the PhD. Course "Modern Times, Modern Rituals." Department of Ethnography and Social Anthropology, University of Aarhus (Denmark) November 1997. (Last retrieved from author's academia.edu page https://www.academia.edu/236253/Rituals_of_Difference_and_Identity_Connecting_the_Global_and_the_Local on 25.10.2016. p.1.)

> At this time, scholars should take the difficult positions, and not simply build boundaries, and find fracture points. We have to take this moment to complexify, to show how hybrids are proliferating, how the old persists alongside the new (or how the apparently new is really quite old), and how new ritual forms continue to accommodate diversity, create new blends and hybrids, rather than homogenizing the world or severing the future from the past. Our approach to ritual, therefore needs to consider the new ways ritual acts in the world, but needs to do so without merely reproducing the existing polarities between traditional and modern, local and global, internal and external. The gray area, the transgressions that seed the new territories - these are our most important theoretical grounds.
>
> (Wilk, 1997, p.8).

**Transliterations & Affective attunement: Changing the codes associated with kebab**

The British Kebab Awards' organizer's attitude gains further significance in an age where there is a growing trend of branding culinary traditions and techniques as nationally framed intangible cultural heritages as part of governmental agendas, or as exoticized niches in the streets of multicultural cities by restaurants that capitalize on that. BKA's attempt is a slightly different gastronationalism project, one that is facing inwards, and not outwards. BKA does not seek an international recognition of a dish or culinary technique that is already historicised and imagined as part of the nation, locally; but it frames a dish, a technique that is associated with elsewhere of the nation as part of the national repertoire, in a celebratory event.

Besides the difficulty of claiming "a" kebab due to a lack of denotational clarity, fixing kebab to an authenticated anchor in time and space that would become the reference of 'properness', is against the way BKA chooses to present it. A quest for authenticity means that any act of appropriation and adaptation will be judged in reference to this fixed form in a single moment, and be perceived as derivatives in the best, instead of enjoying their own authorial space. BKA does not capitalize on authentications but claims a sector that is proper to the country where the Awards institute themselves. Inclusivity –of both the variety of people and ways *in situ*- trumps authenticity. Kebab is not framed as an emblem of ethnic difference, but as one of unity of practice. BKA does not exoticise kebab either as a vaguely defined regional dish or technique, nor does it confine it to an ethno-cultural framework (i.e. Turkish or Kurdish). Such strategies, if deployed, would be reinforcing the state of migrancy, and subsequently a status of the Other; the Other whose food is not simply from elsewhere but that belongs to elsewhere; the Other who herself belongs to elsewhere. BKA embraces, through celebratory means, the journey of the geographically, gastronomically and ethnically mobile kebab, as a British *phenomena.*

While a demarcation in ethnically defined communitarian terms is refused, BKA makes a different call for community: eaters, producers, sellers of Kebab in Britain, unite! This sense of community refers to formation of taskscapes, based on shared activity more than anything else, in a particular landscape. The BKA's re-configuration of community still speaks to and is informed by a sense of nationally defined boundaries. The challenge is that, the space is claimed as one of practice and not one of origin]. This enunciation is to be taken seriously.

Cécile Laborde reminds us:

> […] on the whole, British policy, while alternating between multicultural, difference- sensitive rhetoric and (increasingly) appeals to shared nationality and citizenship tests, has pursued a not wholly unsuccessful course of culturally-sensitive integration. One becomes British not through cultural assimilation or declarations of patriotic loyalty but, rather, through participation with others in the labour market, local schools, neighbourhood life, civil society associations, and local and national politics.
>
> (Laborde 2011)

British Kebab Awards aims to increase the visibility of such cultural and economic quality of the participation that is mobilised around the kebab as an institution.

British Kebab Awards does not have standardising agenda, it maintains difference on the one hand, but claims this difference to be a part of the nation, through kebab's "here and now" manifestations by means of a spectacular event. Cleansing the kebab of its notional dirt is achieved through a recognition of its contribution to the economy and its value in everyday socializations. Moreover, the event, with its recruitment of MPs, brings visibility to the electoral potential of the people mobilised around kebab while re-instituting pride and prestige to the members of the kebab-making community by acknowledging its value for (feeding/fueling) the nation.

The British Kebab Awards ceremony makes it indirectly possible to voice the non-sectoral needs and desires of groups who are still notionally migrant, but who practically feel at home, whether they participate to the formal practices of citizenship (i.e. electoral system). BKA is not just a mnemonic event framing the kebab sector's contribution to the economy, which will indirectly suggest the minority communities' value for the nation –though it does that too. The kebab producers, servers, wholesalers –the layers of the sector- as well as the different ethnicities involved are cause for celebration because we all do kebab. If any difference is to be cherished, it is the entrepreneurial spirit with which the kebab is serving the taste of the nation.

Is such endeavor indirectly complementary to an integrationist and cohesionist agenda? Can BKA contribute to the lives of vaguely defined ethnic communities, without framing them as such? Even though kebab is not claimed as an ethno-cultural institution, it does contribute to the lives of ethno-culturally defined Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish-Cypriots communities. A loosely defined community of an estimated 400, 000, popularly referred to as the Turkish Speaking Community, the Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish-Cypriots of UK are highly heterogeneous group divided along the variations of religious practices and political views that horizontally cuts across the ethnic or national belongings. As Doğuş puts it: "We bring people together, those who wouldn't otherwise step a foot in the other's mosque or association".

BKA's framing of Kebab as a British institution hence serves multiple purposes: It declares Britishness through an extended *kebab* participation that exceeds the confines of ethnic demarcations; it encourages further participation in linguistic and other terms, at the same time it makes it possible to come together, as a community –one that is loosely but still defined not along the lines of ethnic-linguistic demarcations, but a sectoral one, around a cause that also makes a statement of political visibility, contact and participation to electoral representational structures.

**Interethnic Community of Kebab**

Ash Amin notes the importance of creating public spaces that are "inclusive, safe and pleasant" for the communities to be able to negotiate interethnic transformations. According to Amin, such projects are challenging as "[t]he city's public spaces are not natural servants of multicultural engagement" (2002, p.967) whether enclaves are sustained by governmentally instituted housing segregation or by everyday life's space allocations based on common tasks. Amin furthermore notes: "The contact spaces of housing estates and urban public spaces, in the end, seem to fall short of inculcating interethnic understanding, because they are not structured as spaces of interdependence and habitual engagement" (p.969). Amin, in reference to a personal communication with Les Back, suggests "prosaic negotiations" in micropublics as an insufficient yet necessary step (ibid.).

**Kebab Awards without Kebab: Tactical Absences**

What is important to recognize is that kebab itself is mostly absent from this ceremony as materiality. The menu is mixed; though there are *koftas* served, that some guests called kebabs, the main course does not include a particular kebab dish[57]. Despite the expectations and to the disappointment of some guests, kebab is not served at the BKA. Similarly, visual representations of kebab or an aesthetics that could be associated with kebab shops are absent from the design of the space. The ballroom that is selected for the ceremony is dimly lit by chandeliers that hang from the ceiling in an oppressively ostentatious style. In a sense, the decoration is suggestive of a neutral celebratory mood: one that does not attach itself to the gratification of a particular person, ethnicity or, despite the occasion's focus, a culinary item. This tactical absence of kebab is informative. It is consistent with and at the service of the conciliatory mechanisms of BKA, allowing a space and event that is welcoming to all practitioners of kebab, without prioritizing a singular manifestation of it, that would also fix it in time-space.

Choosing a singular kebab dish as the main course or decorating the walls of the hotel with visuals of kebab would be to lock the reference points to single images and imaginaries, making an ambiguity that is also lived as freedom of movement between signifiers impossible. Rather, it is in this vaguely associated multiplicity of mental images that British Kebab Awards wants to embrace kebab.

[57] Towards the end of the BKA 2016, a Telegraph journalist who was present to report on the event jokingly said: "Now that my shift is over, and I'm hungry I can go get a proper kebab from the shop on my street".

BKA chooses a strategy of maintaining the multiplicity and open-endedness of kebab, to allow a collectively tenable enunciation, a collectivity imagined by association to kebab, and kebab associated with many modes of catering and consumption. Though BKA has to compromise this open-endedness while prioritizing particular categories of award, it does so in the tactical absence of kebab's material-objective references or visual representations. These would furthermore be counter-productive to a project of redefining and re-appropriating it as a multicultural institution, a re-nationalized product, especially in cases of their ethnic and regional variations. As such, BKA also evades an event that could otherwise turn into a McDonalds or Disney ritual (Appadurai 1990). Hence, BKA intentionally refrains from doing what would be an act of "'tricky' localization, where what looks like real local culture is just a simulation, produced and marketed to a Western model" (Hall 1993, p.354 quoted in Wilk, 1997, p.3), in this case to a "host" Britain. BKA does not bluntly ignore or deny associations with communities that are also stigmatized through kebab, but tactically avoids symbolism that would fix kebab to its past elsewhere. The recognition of "having arrived from elsewhere" in Doğuş' opening speech, is not the end of the narrative, but its beginning. The absence of kebab itself as a material possibility of consumption, is a tactic of refraining from "a" definition. Not eating "a" kebab, opens up the possibility of talking about and framing "most" kebabs, if not all. The alimentary pedagogy that is enacted demands kebab to be recognised as a product and phenomenon of here and now, as one belonging to "us" all, no matter what its origins are. But also, the materiality of kebab is suspended, alongside its predominant imagery of saucy *döner* of late night, not to end the discussion at its moment of re-localisation; but to start a

field of associations and recognition anew. BKA is not after a definition, it is after belonging, sense and place-making. It is after a home, one in which it can be and do itself, beyond representing itself.

BKA's refrain from fixing the kebab as the signifier of a particular community or fixing kebab as signified by one of its community representations has further socio-political implications. The event is not an "essentialist assertion of difference", which Avtar Brah reminds us, can be counterproductive for the purposes of affirmatively claiming ethnicities, as it can serve to reinforce inequalities already present in a particular socio-cultural context (2000, p.444). Brah's distinction between categories of difference and their deployment is crucial to remember here. BKA's claim to kebab is an act of establishing difference and successively unity, by means of experience. By means of collective affirmation of difference, unity as social relation is established. The sense and place making, two pillars of home-making, takes place at this enunciative insterstice of difference as experience and difference as categorical attribute. The mobility and mobilisation is hence double-folded: on the one hand, the need to recognize the multiplicity and the dispersed nature of what is categorised as an homogenuous collectivity, a social actor who owns kebab is expressed; and on the other unity of experience is claimed by shared experience of kebab and values that relate to work ethics.

Place and sense-making are not simultaneously achieved projects and in cases of diaspora communities and their culinary intrusions to a previously homogenuously imagined space, mutual sense-making and intelligibilities lag

behind everyday encounters and improvisational sharings that already accommodate the food and the body of the other. Experiential place-making occurs, especially with food, even before acts of categorisations and namings can account for the lived reality. On the one hand confusingly, on the other very bluntly, BKA tries to bridge the lag between experience of home and the acceptance of at home-ness; by an heightened expression of mobility and dispersed practices that surround kebab.

In the introduction to *A Taste of Thyme: Culinary Cultures of the Middle East,* Tapper & Zubaida note "The patterns of Middle Eastern food cultures we discern do not depend on historical continuity. History is made up of movement and transformations of societies, dynasties, populations, diffusions and innovations. In this flux, cultures, too, are transformed, though they continue to refer back to their past. Culture, historically considered, appears as variations and play of interwoven themes, which shift their weave and patterns but remain recognizable" (p.10). Such mobility is surely not a monopoly of the Middle Eastern foods, but is the case for any culinary superimpositions. A mobility across spaces, availabilities, people and changing tastes give food a palimpsestic character. What diaspora food suffers from is actually the impasse of authenticity. An authenticity that is diasporic, that feeds itself from being at home-ness, is tried to be fixed at the time and space, culture of elsewhere. The contemporaneity of Kebab, and an overwriting of its genealogy is hence tactical.

Within this context of prolific manifestations in Britain and a tactical undermining –if not impossibility of genealogical quest, kebab still needs an aid to claim recognition. BKA and its categories respond to the needs of order and legibility of what seems messy, ungraspable and scattered practices. Food's capacity to work "as a medium of social and cognitive organization" defining "social identities, categories and relationships" through its symbolic, social and material properties have been widely recognized (Patico & Lozada, 2016, p.203). This act of ordering claims a position within the British nation, if not interrupting then layering its historical continuity with Middle Eastern cultures. This has the effect of including it in a place-specific historical narrative within the possibilities of a multicultural setting that is welcoming, though not without its problems, to the different forms of kebab. The difference is rendered graspable, edible and palatable through categorical ordering that still aim at safeguarding the variety. The multicultural kebab is to be cherished through the denial of a standard or guidelines by which one might adjudicate proper kebab-ness. It is a hence a settling act, that sees the variety as a richness to be celebrated, and not as a dispute to be resolved, in the home kebab finds itself.

> For a micropolitics of collective enunciation, it seems that what is required is a grasping of the potential before it can be regulated within the dominant system of the day. The notion that the micro and macro are always intertwined [...] is what makes the concept of the micropolitical so generative [...]. The generative potential of the micropolitical is strengthened [...] by its capacity to be captured by the macropolitical and deployed within various universes of value.

> This allows it to remain mobile and resist becoming didactic. Its potential, as Massumi points out, 'is immediately collective. It's not a mere possibility, it's an active part of the constitution of that situation, it's just one that hasn't been fully developed, that hasn't been fully capacitated for unfolding. This means that there are potential alter-politics at the collectively in-braced heart of every situation, even the most successfully conformist in its mode of attunement'
>
> (Manning in interview with Nasrin Himada 2009, p.6)

"What is happening now, the weakening of boundaries, the proliferation of new subnationalities, the opening of global markets, and widespread population movements are both very new and very old (see Dirlik 1996, Shohat and Stam 1996)" (in Wilk, 1997, p.8).

**The dangers of spectacularity**

The uplifting, unifying and proud mood of the BKA hides some of the tensions that are inherent in the organisation of the awards ceremony, as well as the exploitation that is part and parcel of the catering business in especially big cities. Those who sweat and bleed do not make it to the expensive tables that the managers and owners pay for. Does the BKA act as a pacifier? If so, certainly beyond the TSC. Brexit revealed the starvation fears of a nation whose culinary identity is defined through terms of lack that may have partially caused the hunger for contemporary abundance. If all else leaves, kebab will remain. If nothing else, this should be satiating.

**Re-nationalisation**

Stuart Hall reminds us “Britain is not a sceptred isle which arose, fully formed and separate, as an integral nation-state, from the North Sea” (2000, p.217). The national story’s assumptions of unity and homogeneity of culture until the post-war migrations from the Caribbean and the Asian sub-continent, according to Hall, are exaggerated narratives, “contested by Scots, Welsh and Irish; challenged by rival local and regional allegiances; and cross-cut by class, gender and generation” [...] “There have always been many different ways of being British”.

Older repertoires or repertoires of elsewhere are framed in their new institutional setting as belonging to Great Britain and as being a Great British Institution. The kebab awards, is not just a performative event that imagines and reframes the boundaries of otherness. Making kebab at home in Britain, modifies the national home itself. What is then the character of the nation imagined by means of kebab?

**Multiculturalism and/or Multi-cultural Revisited**

Malik’s in his critique of the multiculturalism, as a policy project, notes its authoritarian tendencies suppressing agonistic dialogue through heightened political correctness that strictly polices statements that are made in reference to ethnic or racial differences. He argues, subsequently the multiculturalism policies create a counter-multi-cultural effect, a process that constitutes according to Malik "the irony of multiculturalism" (2015). As Hall theorized more than a decade ago, “multiculturalism” is substantive.

> It references the strategies and policies adopted to govern and manage the problems of diversity and multiplicity which multi-cultural societies throw up. It is usually used in the singular, signifying the distinctive philosophy or doctrine which underpins multi-cultural strategies.
>
> (Hall 2000, 209-210)

According to Hall, the singularity of the word, wrongly creates a sense of uniform policy that would be a remedy to the misdeeds and problems of encounters among the differently imagined elements of the nation. The *multiculturalism* is never a unitary project, and its variations of practice are spatio-temporarily specific. Hall sees a bigger potential in the adjective "multi-cultural": it "is by definition plural" and "by definition culturally heterogeneous". Such need for a distinction between multiculturalism, a floating signifier itself, and "multi-cultural", a term with resonances of diversity and plurality, opens up a space of referring to the practices that are multi-cultural, as opposed to multiculturalism as a guiding principle. Hence if any success of the multi-cultural is to be imagined, there is work to be done both against the perils of a multiculturalism that straightjackets difference along the ethnic and racial lines, to the erasure of heterogenity of the groups but also of their movement towards home making. It is only through a re-institution of multi-cultural practices – multi-cultural ontologies that an epistemology of multiculturalism can be effective and inclusive of the practices that are from bottom-up and organized by the "multi-cultural" elements themselves.

According to Hage, this is a possibility, as multiculturalism is *accommodating*, it finds room when necessary.

> Multiculturalism has always found a way, indeed it can be defined by an ability, to find room for minor elements of 'the law of the other' to exist within the dominant national law –here I don't necessarily mean 'law' in a formal sense, though it could be, but more an anthropological conception of law as 'the other's order of things' or 'the other's way of life'. In this sense, we can say that multiculturalism is primarily defined by this relation of encompassment. The dominant national law opens a space, a state of exception if you will, where the law of the other can exist for as long as it is encompassed by the national law. The space where the law of the other exist can vary in content and in magnitude but what cannot possibly change is that the dominant culture has to be encompassing culture and the law of the other the encompassed culture. (Hage 2011, p.163)

For the multiculturalism to make room in the political or anthropological law of the nation though, there needs to be a legibility and a certain compatibility between the disorder of the other and the order of the nation willing to accommodate such diversion from norm. Such inclusion also requires the willingness of the groups to be accommodated, to acquire, practice or demand legibility.

As Hage argues in *White Nation* (2000), multicultural recognition and the valorization of the other –and its culture, can serve an agenda of ideological anti-Eurocentrism and can be seen as a form of anti-racism. Multiculturalism remains to be a limited anti-racist policy though, as it constantly reproduces white Europeans' entitlement to the nation. This entitlement to nation is what is puzzling and make the project of BKA an intricate call for legibility. Can the diaspora asks for a nationalization of a dish and as such gain a recognition –not of its body, but of the fact that how integrated its food and its existence, already is to the nation.

**Alimentary Pedagogy**

If multi-cultural is to be accomplished, it needs agents that makes sense of the everyday practices as such. A need is to bridge the epistemologies and the ontologies of difference. I argue here that the act of translation we need is not between people and practices, as much as it is between how we relate to what we do and we get to know what we do. British Kebab Awards is one attempt to that aim, making new senses of our ways of relating to edible agents, which are, like humans, are mobile in their associations and have malleable epistemologies.

It is with great faith in multicultural, that I think we should revisit our ethnic-national lenses, especially in our readings of the diaspora cultures. Such faith is not sustained by pure romantic and hence unattainable love of pluralist ideals, but is informed by and grounded by the livelihoods and foodscapes created and sustained, heterogenuously by people, here and now of Britain, everyday.

A shared repertoire of cuisines, sectoral agenda and social stigma accompanying their source of income, make it possible this act of reversing the value one brings through a differentiated identity, as belonging to the mainstream. What needs to be emphasized is that the BKA is not about identity differentiation of a community through food, but unlike most food spectacles, it is denationalizing, de-ethnicizing a food item, in order to re-nationalize it as British. This domestication of kebab by means of BKA aims at replacing the image of the dirty other by declaring joint ownership to the erasure of the dichotomy in the popular perception of consuming British and provisioning non-British. By uniting the actors of both sides, and with a double tactic of naming and then uniting the variety of the groups involved in the provisioning of kebab, it aims at both recognition and forgetting. These acts of selective forgetting, delineations of visibilities and invisibilities constitute a claim to governability, but conditions of it are voiced by those to be governed.

Imagined cuisines feed imagined nations. BKA asks for a recognition of "eating like a nation" what is prepared "as a nation. To quote Narayan, "There are few ready-made recipes for how to combine the various ingredients of contemporary nation states into political and cultural arrangements that are nourishing to all their members. Thinking about food offers some useful metaphors for our complex political realities" (1995, p.82).

**Home by Declaration, by Practice**

BKA creatively deploys kebab's bastard status, it's un-delineable geographical, cultural and etymological roots to leave behind a project of archaeological inquiry, to embrace the dynamism and variety of the concept and the practices, as they take shape in the locality of today's Britain. It does so by micropolitically managing the value-ridden judgments around kebab that are unified around its dirtiness and disorderly behavior, the populations associated with it and its health implications; to replace them with discourses that emphasize the contribution to the economy and the participation in society's richness by bringing diversity; values and practices that make the people engaging in these acts conform to Britishness. BKA hence moves one step further than acknowledging the food of the other as an extra element to the nation, but declares kebab a constitutive element of a multicultural British nation. It furthermore changes on multiple levels, the elements of affective bond among the kebab producers to one about pride rather than one about shame. Through a re-writing of affective economies as they relate to the caterers of kebab, the extended invitation is a call for co-habitation, with both communities imagined as minority others and the mainstream whiteness. A modification of the status of the maker of the disorderly, dirty kebab, BKA allows a collective presence that is not ethnically framed, but through a conformism, respect and maintenance of British traditions. The recognition, legibility and 'visibility' that BKA's presence demands, is not an ethno-linguistically delineated one; though serves the purposes of bringing a countability and visibility to the Turkish and Kurdish speaking communities.

The recognition that is required is a collaborative *doing* of kebab, a *doing* that brings together the prevalence of 'eating' kebab, with its 'catering'; bridging a social demarcation between the consumer subject and the provider (migrant, other) subject. The reluctance to fix the floating significations of kebab is hence in line with an agenda that is not trying to come up with definitions, with intellectual intelligibilities but with propositions based in the practices of kebab in London. It is certainly an act of sense making, but one that is based on consuming and preparing, the shared experience and engagement with the kebab, rather than an ossified system of 'knowing' or 'defining' kebab beyond its experiential knowledge. As Narayan notes "We risk privileging the mind too much if we ignore the ways in which a more carnal relish may sometimes make for a stronger appreciation than intellectual 'understanding'" (Narayan 1995, p.80).

The event has no agenda of standardizing what kebab stands for, nor mobilizing a group of people who will act in perfect unison for either communitarian or sectoral needs. The event however functions to bring the practitioners of the sector together, to explore further points of concurrence/concord/concert, be it with the structures of the macropolitical through contact with the representatives of constituencies at the parliamentary level, or through re-formulating subjectivities as part of the British nation, through a participation in its traditions, social and economic well-being. It is hence a formative encounter, refraining from setting a singular ethno-linguistic, sectoral standard but embracing the points of contact; and one that is open-ended and whose variety of effects will unfold over time.

To re-generate, re-nationalize kebab as British is neither an accomplished trajectory nor it is a utopian dream. This act of *bricolage*, a creative and at times subversive reuse of whatever is at hand (first taken up by Levi-Strauss, then by cultural studies) refers to the capacity and process of imagining new uses and meanings for things. *Bricolage* implies a reapproptiation that goes beyond the acts of ordering, classifying the already available things or properties of things. It refers to an active, creative and productive reappropriation which relationship to meanings –set of meanings, is not restraurative, but one that gains rehabilitative capacities through sustained reiterations and the enactment of accompanying discursive systems, that are rooted in everyday life. BKA's significance lies not in its display of kebab through shifts of national associations that it has been, but in showing the symbolic importance of everyday acts of food and how they reflect on the nation. This also shows both the fragility and the malleability of nation-state formations, if given enough time. BKA's future success hence is dependent on the reiteration of yearly event that re-institutes pride to the members of kebab producing migrant communities, not as homogenuously imagined clusters, but as part of the economic activity and social and cultural constitution of Britain.

**Kebab as British: Anticipatory Gastro-Politics or Utopian Dream?**

> Whatever we consider to be a currently impossible, but perhaps desirable, goal or value is always modelled – *ex negativo* – on whatever we perceive and imagine to be the actual and the possible in existing society. However, social agency, which is always informed (and sometimes explicitly driven) by values, ideals and social goals, regularly changes society to the effect that what used to be an impossibility becomes a possibility.
>
> (Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis 2002, p.326-327)

As nations and food histories consolidate themselves through repetitive exposure to particular discursive framings and by the operations of rituals, events that sustain particular national imageries, BKA too, has the potential of writing the *British*ness of Kebab through acts of re-enactment & re-instatement by repetition of the event and its yearly presence in media outlets, and in the agendas of the MPs. It is a project of imagining the nation, instituting a "system of cultural representation whereby people come to imagine a shared experience of identification with an extended community" (McClintock 1995, 353). BKA's tactical intervention lies in its offer of a home to kebab in Britain, but also its encouragement of sectoral and parliamentary actors to imagine themselves as part of a Britain that is inclusive of kebab. Such imagination's survival is dependent on the co-operation of disparate actors involved in sustaining practices and rituals that embrace and imagine kebab as part of the nation, as well as a regeneration of the affective values associated with its everyday consumptions.

As McClintock reminds us, "nations are not simply phantasmagoria of the mind but are historical practices through which social difference [and unity] is both invented and performed" (Ibid.).

Nations are hence themselves mobile in time and space: they are constantly invented, that is creatively imagined and practiced. It is important to note that this particular enactment of kebab, demands voiced by the BKA organization and the imaginations of nation is one among possible frameworks and only time will show its effectiveness in terms of determining one among possible fates for kebab, but also for Britain as a nation. Kebab, as a food item would surely keep creating its own excesses along the way, would be re-appropriated, un-confirmed and respectively re-confirmed, as will do British nation and nationalism.

"The (largely imaginary) status of a goal or value might change from impossible to possible, from 'utopian' via feasible to matter of fact. Without the agency of the human subjects that form society, this change in the social imagination and the order of meanings and values would never happen" (Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis 2002, p.327).

**Recognition of what? Imagining Home as Home, not as the Host**

BKA declares Britain the home of kebab, based on its everyday manifestations and ubiquity, hence its participation to everyday life and economies. It's an act of soft power. Joseph S. Nye defines soft power as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments". (Nye 2004, p.x).

The recognition that is asked, is not that of kebab or the communities who are associated with it, but their at-home'ness. It is not from the status of the margins that BKA speaks but from a position of space-off (de Lauretis) that is actually still within the boundaries of digestibility, if the camera tilted just a little bit. This in return gives the home to imagine itself, not as the host, but home that is inclusive of its elements. It is an invitation to redefine nation to the inclusion of not its excesses, but of what already belongs here, one that is already at home. The event also shows how it is possible to curate the nation through manipulations of how to imagine a food item.

**Here and Now & Future**

> If we no longer think of the relationship between cultures and their adherents as perfectly continuous, totally synchronous, wholly correspondent, and if we think of cultures as permeable, and on the whole defensive boundaries between polities, a more promising situation appear. Thus to see Others not as ontologically given but as historically constituted would be to erode the exclusivist biases we so often ascribe to cultures, our own not least. Cultures may then be represented as zones of dependence, of exclusiveness or of sharing, all taking place in the global history that is our element. Exile, immigration, and the crossing of boundaries are experiences that can therefore provide us with new narrative forms or, in John Berger's phrase, with other ways of telling.
>
> (Said 1989, p.225)

BKA allows kebab to recover contemporaneity within its location of practice, UK, as the food of here and now as opposed to referring to it within the confines of a national or even regional heritage that belongs to the past of the people who are predominantly associated with its practice today. A dish, kebab, becomes incorporated in discourse to the language of Britishness to the detriment of its bastard status, by rendering intelligible through its association with values and behaviors associated with Britishness, as opposed to the other within. The kebab reality is given an order within this Britishness, rendered digestible as the ubiquitous, familiar, product of hard work and contributing to the economy as well as to the socio-cultural diversity. [Is it a double-edged sword? In order to contribute to cultural diversity, it needs to remain an external enough element.] In BKA, the kebab does not appear as a marker of (ethnic or class) difference, but as a converging element that unites the consuming and producing cultures, as well as the different ethnically and linguistically defined communities under Britishness. It does so by recognizing the kebab as part of the British social fabric, recognizing a different thread, but still as part of the texture of the country. By association with the kebab, these ethnically and linguistically referred groups are declared part of British nation. Kebab, 'Made in Britain', in return makes Britain.

I need to reiterate that BKA does not seek the kind of fixity that would mean a bracketing of here and now, as do Unesco recognition of culinary heritages. The BKA is heterologous to such acts of claiming ownership. While the intangible heritage freezes in time and space, the home of a dish or preparation technique that has the mark of different people and geographies, claim coming from the people sure of their and the food's at-home'ness.

The tension between the centripetal and centrifugal forces that BKA deploys is only possible through this diaspora state. On the one hand it brings a sense of affective unity that extends beyond the Turkish speaking community to the consumers, on the other the variety is embraced with an abundance of categories, that not only allows but actually encourages divergence. BKA has the advantage and the challenge of being a diaspora act: it needs to claim home, before it can claim food at home. It is also by this ability to differently framing geographic and regional assignment/belonging that BKA can afford to retain a variety while giving it at home. Cultural heritage fixes one version of a dish/product as "the" version. However, BKA is about retaining and maintaining the value of this mobility of genres, modes of serving and consuming. BKA is about making kebab at home in Britain and such mobility is not just most welcome at home, but at home-ness is dependent on this embrace of epistemological and ontological mobilities.

Hage notes:

> The ideal 'secure base' is that which embraces us enough to give us confidence to move: it neither too imprisoning to stop us from moving nor too neglectful to make us feel without any anchorage. When it is that good we internalise it, we don't even need to 'touch it' to know it is there. This is also the definition of the good 'home'. 'Home' here is not that which stops you from moving, rather it is what gives us a sense of security to move in the world.

> That's why when we are talking about movement and travel we need to differentiate between good movement (people who move confidently, hopeful in the face of the uncertainties of the future) and bad movement (people who move hesitantly, scared of the uncertainties of the future).
>
> (Hage 2004, p.116).

British Kebab Awards, through its existence and curatorial strategies, on the one hand extends the reach of "epistemic community" (Assiter 1996, 2000 in Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis 2002) by bridging the divide between the consumer and the caterer on the basis of shared affective attunement of disorderly perception of kebab. On the other hand it plays at modifying the quality of this epistemic community, by an institution of pride, that belongs to the producers of kebab, but also to the nation, by being the home of kebab, that is not just the messy food to be consumed after celebrations, but food of the nation to be celebrated.

**Chapter Four**

**Home-made food to food making home**

> Sharing food with another human being is an intimate act that should not be indulged in lightly.
>
> M.F.K/ Fisher, *An Alphabet for Gourmets*

In a flat in Stoke Newington, the smells of cabbage fill the living room where I am offered nuts with instant coffee, placed on the small coffee table with speed upon my arrival but with a curatorial attention and elegance. The cabbage, previously rested in vinegared water, is now softening in a big pot of boiling water in the kitchen, visually absent, yet making its olfactory presence felt in the hallways of the council house where the flat is located. The leaves will soon wrap the mixture of minced meat, onions and spices to become stuffed cabbage leaves "*lahana dolmasi*". Bedded and exhibited only briefly in transparent plastic take away containers in groups of four or five depending on their size, they will be sold within the first hour of their arrival at the next day's organic market. "It sells fast. But the children don't like it" says Hatice, "It smells bad. Does it bother you?" she keeps asking me, extending her hospitality to concerns about the management of the smellscape of her house.

Just a few doors ahead, I'll have soon a meal prepared by Halime. The meal will consist of chicken breast fried in butter, with rice and a salad announced to be "Turkish style" but that will include, to my surprise, both avocado and chopped pickles inside.

A few miles ahead, to the west of the city, Selime probably finished her shopping after her tennis instruction course and because she is tired, she will cook chicken thighs with sweet bell peppers and hot fresh chilli peppers that she will chop, very quickly, as she did on one of the nights I visited her house. She will spice it with dried mint, dried parsley and thyme. Salt and paper, olive oil or butter is a must. She is trying to keep to a healthy diet, so will probably use a mixture of the two. A few miles to the North, Emre will put a pizza in the oven –because "when you are single, cooking is not fun". Hakan would agree, but that night he has the kids. He will fry organic and vegetarian cauliflower sausages for the kids, served with a great deal of ketchup and will eat the leftovers himself. Just a little bit to the east, Sukran will be cooking a full oven of a chicken dish for her sister, sister's husband and some friends' arrival. In a house in Islington now, there are the discussions about whether to put cinnamon or not in the kofta between Kostas and Elif. Kostas is Greek and his wife is Turkish. Depending on who has got steam left to argue after a long day at work or how the tasks of cooking and doing the dishes have been split that day, the kofta's fate with cinnamon will be decided.

All over the city, on a week night the food is being negotiated in households where Turkish speaking people live, given the time and resource availabilities, taste preferences and presence of kids. Depending on who is present for dinner that night, what ingredients are left in the fridge, or how much energy one has that night, no table is the same as the previous night's. The table is also always divided within the members of a household, mostly family members in this research. Every dish refused to be cooked or eaten is also an assertion.

An attempt at accommodating each other's tastes, sometimes return to basics of just feeding the younger ones. Sometimes improvised with what's left in the fridge, sometimes previously structured and planned, the table is rarely a consensual and uniform space but one where great negotiation and creativity lies.

Given the abundance of ways of engaging with food even within a single household, the fieldwork that aimed at following Turkish speaking individuals in their activities of shopping and cooking proved the most resistant to attempts at analytical ordering. Initially, I hoped that patterns would emerge out of this abundance of encounters extending from chopping the onions in a kitchen in Stoke Newington to carrying shopping bags in Balham, based on gender, class, age and marital status. Instead, the variety of ways in which each member of these households engage with the taskscapes of food, even during a single month, showed such flexibility that it was overwhelming.

The challenges of producing knowledge about someone's domestic foodscapes grew exponentially in every home visit. Most encounters were initiated in public spaces, during events in which I participated (Turkish Entrepreuneurs Breakfast) or language or music schools I visited. I was easily invited to their homes, though there was always a resistance to participate in the research. Most found my research useless. Cooking was seen as a mundane and insignificant act where they deployed little to no agency. As expected, once passed the threshold, their foodscapes at home showed great responsiveness to a variety of concerns and availabilities through skillful engagement with the materialities of their houses and food. Unexpectedly though, the questions I kept asking remained unanswered.

My faith in the possibility of having open-ended and revealing conversations while shopping and cooking with them, soon got replaced by an acceptance that home is not something they like to reflect on. “Where is home for you?” or “Do you miss Turkey?” remain as utterly clumsy questions when directed to Turkish speaking people who think “Home (motherland) is where one eats, not where one is born” (*Vatan insanın doyduğu yerdir, doğduğu değil.* Halime, Hatice, Elif, Selime) and who perceive their city of dwelling as a country of abundance where you find everything you need, where “Absence is absent” (*Yok yok!* Elif, Halime, Hatice). Many potential participants refused to take part in the research, on the grounds that they ‘did not do things the Turkish way at home’ or that their ‘house is not really an authentic Turkish speaking household’, considerately thinking that our meeting would be a waste of time for me, if I were after the Turkish food. Over time, as the field and I grew, I found ways of translating the invitations to host me, to ways of me hosting their story, no matter how unrepresentative they thought their foodscapes were.

Based on these rich encounters, in this chapter, I will attempt at giving an ordered story of food activities based on fragments of an overwhelming embodied fieldwork where the participants preferred embodied acts of cooking or eating together to narrating their relations to home. While doing so, I hope to highlight how the references to culinary repertoires and authorial voices diverge from those of the sectoral ones and how dwelling, at home, unfolds itself. I also hope to show that looking at home through food shows how the sphere of private and familial activity connects one with the relations of neighborhood and city.

**Imagined 'Turkish' Households vs. Actual Spaces**

As mentioned briefly above, an imagined yet non-existent ideal Turkish household to which the majority of the people I met did not think they adhered, haunted both the recruitment process and the encounters at households. The distance that the participants think exist between this ideal and their homes, is also the place where they undermine their skillful engagements with their homes and food.

This ideal and authentic Turkish speaking household is imagined before all as extremely clean. Norms of cleanliness above all require that the shoes are removed at the door, there are no dishes lying around in the kitchen and that there is no visible dust. This normative household also requires the acts of cooking to be laboursome. The convenience offered by the ready-made microwavable meals or ordering from sites such as Deliveroo or Just Eat fall out of the skillful engagements required for the authentic home. Turkish meals need to be cooked in reference to the Anatolian recipes and meals need to be consumed as a family, at regular intervals.

Everyday's spatio-temporal structure and the livelihood of households negotiating the schedules and activities of multiple household members make these arrangements rarely possible. In most cases, expressed by female participants as their lack of skills, flexibilities in the re-arrangement of the houses and meals actually show great adaptation as a dwelling activity. This imagined home functions as the repertoire of the habits lost, new habits gained, distancing one from the strictness of a 'motherly' home in Turkey (i.e. *If my mother saw*

*that I just put a pizza in the oven, she would not be happy*, Emre) as much as it does from another 'migrant' house, where things are more properly done, than their present household.

The tasks of buying, cooking, eating and their variations as in "How" and "Why" are a function of one's place of dwelling bound by the structural availabilities of space as well as the time-demands. In a majority of the households I visited, the limitations of having a proper kitchen was referred to as an obstacle to proper cooking. London houses being perceived as drastically smaller than houses in Turkey, whether the participant was from a rural or urban background, meant that in some houses the kitchen was integrated to the main living room (Hakan, Emre, Tülin, Elif). In cases where the kitchen had a separate door, it was still located in such proximity to the living room (Hatice, Halime, Sukran, Selime) that any engagement with food required calculations of who was present at home and whether the smells and sounds of cooking would be disruptive of other activities that are taking place in the house. These tensions are most visible when the houses are also home-offices, sites of other taskscapes geared for financial gain. These however seem to interfere with the proper preparations and consumptions of food.

Selime, a tennis instructor in her early 30s, states her distance from the ideal and motherly household as follows:

> Of course I don't cook three meals a day like my mother used to when I was a kid. We usually skip breakfast. We just have cereals. Also, Ali works at home. He runs his consultancy company from that room. So, I don't cook if he is working. If he has skype meetings with clients, for example. I can't make too much noise. During day time, we treat the house like an office. [...] He makes his own lunch if I am out. He eats pizza or something.

Elif (early 30s, female) works as a remote personal assistant in between academic jobs, mostly from home. As is the case for most people of her generation trying to balance multiple part time jobs, she is overwhelmed by the amount of work that she needs to accomplish, mostly at home. Like Selime, she also refrains from cooking during the day time as she finds the smell of food "distractive while working". For her, the fact that the kitchen is placed inside the living room makes it also impossible to sustain an orderly household, one she might have had if she was living in Istanbul.

> Look how small the kitchen counter is. If I just have a cup of tea, then that cup stays there forever. The whole living room then looks dirty. It is not that I am a dirty person normally, but I have to let it go. I have so much work to do. I can't keep a house clean and do all the work. I try not to see anymore you know when the house gets messy. I got used to it. This would not be the case if I were in Istanbul. The houses are much bigger there. But we chose this, didn't we? I am not complaining. I am just letting you know why my house is messy.

Halime (late 40s, female) also uses her domestic space to generate income. She makes jewellery out of beads she collects mainly from charity shops and sells them in open air markets, or during her visits to various community centres. As her daughter bans her from smoking anywhere else in the house but the kitchen, Halime locks herself in the kitchen until Hale comes, and uses the kitchen table as her workspace, laying the beads and ropes on the table. When I ask her, she replies:

> Not much. I have only a pair of hands and I use them to make beads. I lose my concentration if I cook during the day. Because I have to clean the kitchen table before I start cooking, then I have to lay everything back again. I just have a juice in the morning and we eat when my daughter comes home. [...] My mom used to cook the evening meal in the morning. I can't keep up with that.

Negotiated between the demands of work carried out in home offices and the spatial affordances, the distance from the proper household is further implicated in the kinds of food they are required to purchase for matters of convenience. During our shopping trip, Selime buys few ready-made meals, and three pizzas as part of her weekly shopping.

> These will do. On Friday he is out for a lunch meeting. That should be enough for the whole week. But don't write these. I'll cook tonight for you. Write about that. I don't want to look like a bad wife who feeds her husband pizzas. [...]

> Ali does not want me to cook while he is working. But I think I would not cook anyway. I have so much to do. [...] We became so British eating all these.

Turkish food as opposed to British food is perceived to be burdensome, and acts such as warming up a premade dish, or frying pre-cut vegetables bought at the supermarket do not constitute proper acts cooking (Selime, Halime). As Selime's account further shows, the convenience of easy made food distances her from the ideal of wifehood.

These accounts further show that 'home office' does not mean access to home-made food and that the taskscapes of financial capital generation might actually interfere with the tasks of cooking or running a proper household. This distance from the proper household usually attributed to mothers in Turkey, however, is also an effect of dwelling in London: being a proper Londoner in a setting of increased flexible and temporary employment, requires an appreciation of convenience of the ready-made meals, and, where work space and home spaces are integrated, the rules of hygiene also relaxes. It is therefore ironically by means of distancing oneself from the mental imageries of ideal motherly households that these women prove their dwelling in reference to Londoner and British ways of taking care of the household and engaging with acts of cooking. These accounts where the homely space's structure and the uses of the allocated space of cooking is complicated by the inclusion of other 'work' lead to a dissolution of the kitchen as a specialised space.

**Kitchen as the site of non-specialisation**

The organizational and positional qualities of the kitchen are an important factor in household ethnographies for methodological and theoretical reasons. How much of the ethnographic encounter takes place in the kitchen and in what terms gives insights about how the tasks of preparing, cooking and preserving food relate to other socialities surrounding the exchanges with market availabilities, cross-border technologies of communication and the primacy attributed to acts of feeding and eating. Whether or to what extent the ethnographer is allowed in the kitchen space, further illuminate the discussions around privacy, hospitality and the allocation of tasks to specialized rooms in houses. The power enjoyed by the uses of the domestic space delineate the limits of hospitality as well as familial-spatial hierarchies instituted around tasks.

Bell and Valentine note:

> In pre-industrial Europe production (baking, weaving, farming, etc.) and reproduction (cooking, eating, sleeping, child rearing) took place in the same location. There was no separation of activities (work and home) into different spaces (public and private). [...] Following the development of industrial capitalism in the nineteenth century, however, reproduction was removed from the communal sphere and relegated to the private sphere of the home.
>
> (Bell and Valentine (1997) 2006, p.69-70)

The cases where home is also used as a site of production, as a workplace however, complicate accounts of specialisation of tasks and spaces allocated to them. In Halime's house the kitchen is the heart of the house where she spends the majority of her time, even though she claims not to cook that much. A workshop space until her daughter comes home, the kitchen is also a space where she smokes, to relax, as she says. The kitchen is also the place where we, her an I, spent most of our times together, whether we were cooking or not. Whereas in Hatice's house, where cooking is also performed for commercial reasons (i.e. stuffed cabbage leaves to be sold at the local organic farmer's market) the kitchen is a more specialized area. During both of my visits to her house, the kitchen door was closed, also to contain the smells of cooking. In some houses, such spatial allocation for cooking activities is neither possible nor desired. In Elif and Kostas' house, where the kitchen is an integrated part of the living room, the eating, cooking and socializing activities mix with each other, in sensory and symbolic ways.

The kind of boundaries that are instituted –or not- around the kitchen and how the place is ordered through its spatial allocation of actions, is a technique of home-making. Douglas notes: "When we honestly reflect on our busy scrubbings and cleanings in this light we know that we are not mainly trying to avoid disease. We are separating, placing boundaries, making visible statements about the home that we are intending to create out of the material house" (Douglas [1966] 2008, p.85). Most of these participants had little to say about the position or the shapes of their kitchens as they are all renting their houses, with the exception of Hakan and Tülin.

The houses therefore had physical structures that suggested how and which activities would mix with each other. By the institution of taskscapes however, the skillful agents further create or abolish the boundaries with other family members.

“I like that my kitchen is not part of the living room”, says Hatice, “I can be on my own”. Living at her home with two kids and her husband, she finds time spent cooking relaxing. The separate kitchen space, both as a place of cooking for income generation, but also to feed the members of her family, provide her with time off from the crowd in her house. Elif and Kostas also live in a compact space, where their 1+1 flat makes them carry out cooking activities alongside other tasks. Unlike Hatice, who enjoys alone time due to availabilities of a separate kitchen space, for Elif and Kostas, the cooking time is also the time of familial socialisation, one that is cherished after a long day’s work, though not without its tensions. Elif says:

> When the work is too busy, we don’t get to see each other very much. It is nice that the kitchen is part of the living room. Even if it is just one of us who cooks, we can still talk. I sometimes get annoyed as well. He talks a lot when I cook. He says “Don’t put that much salt, don’t put that much olive oil”. Sometimes I just want to kick him out of the kitchen. But where will I kick him? The kitchen is the living room. [...] We found a compromise not to fight. If I make the salad, he makes the meat. If I make the pasta, he makes cacik. We try not to look at what the other does.

> We try not to interfere. But it is difficult you know. We both think we know the best. You see what he is doing.

The welcoming of kitchen as a specialised space or an open one, goes hand in hand with one's perceived talent or success in cooking. Where one feels authoritative in acts of cooking and enjoys cooking, the privacy of the kitchen seems to be preferred. When one does not recognise his/her own acts of cooking as part of a skillful and specialised engagement, expectations from a kitchen as a specialised place of activity also loosens.

**Cooking as Skill or Magical Talent**

The references to a normative Turkish household where 'proper' cooking and cleaning happens went hand in hand with narratives distinguishing between feeding (*doyurmak*) as in providing edibles that are nutritionally healthy and cooking as a gastronomical engagement, being able to provide elaborate dishes. Though the vocabulary of 'good food' was not deployed in this context, such distinction resonates with Murcott's research on pregnant women's conceptualisations of what constitute good food (1993). In what follows, I will look at the culinary skills the participants thought they had, lacked or acquired; also categorising themselves as feeders or as cooks.

With the exception of Hatice, all participants admitted learning cooking in London, though they had been involved in various stages of food preparation and preservation when they were living in Turkey.

Halime, who came to London in her 30s after she married her husband, had never had to cook when she was in Istanbul as she was living in the same building as her mother and sisters. She had a full time job at a bank, which meant that with the time she needed for commuting, there was little time left for her when she came back home. After long hours of work, she would stop at her mother's flat before going back to her flat, have her dinner and go to sleep. In London, deprived of her sisters' and mother's cooking, Halime needed to learn how to cook. Her repertoire has evolved over the years, through trial and error, after many burnt rices.

During my visits to Halime's house, how much she did not like cooking and how untalented she was, constantly came up. Halime sees a difference between exposing an edible to heat (*ısıtmak*) and cooking (*yemek yapmak*), a more elaborate act than just chopping vegetables.

> I throw vegetables on the pan, sometimes a piece of meat or chicken, and it is done. Luckily Hale [her daughter] is not difficult. She eats whatever I make. She also like salads. So we eat lots of salads. She did not starve so far. So I guess we are ok. But no, I can't cook. I feed her.

Halime's constant undermining of her cooking skills and claimed lack of engagement with food, to me, was surprising on many grounds. Her kitchen cupboard was full of spices, she always had a fridge full of fruits and vegetables. Watching her while cooking showed a great mastery of both the ingredients and the tools she engaged with.

Her talented hands simply did not look like they belonged to someone who lacked skills in the kitchen. Tasting her food was even more shocking, as within 10-15 minutes, she was able to prepare the tastiest *menemen,* or chicken with butter served with a perfectly cooked rice. In her house, the tastiest part of the meals was always the salad. Combining tomatoes, mixed leaves, cucumber, pickles and avocado, and seasoning it with Himalayan salt and cold pressed olive oil, Halime was able to create tasty and healthy dishes in short amounts of times. For Halime, the speed and ease with which she engaged with the acts of cooking was proof of how untalented she was. She got bored cooking, she did not enjoy chopping the vegetables –yet she chopped all of them in a perfectly standardised manner as if she were a chef- and she only *made food*, because her daughter needed to eat healthily. She constantly referred to other households where abundant and more complex meals were cooked, especially Hatice's, her neighbour.

Similar to Hatice, for Tülin cooking was something her mother did and she learnt how "to cook in order not to starve" when she came to London, after getting married and having her son. "You need to feed the kids for them to grow" she said in one of my visits to her house. Her motherhood responsibilities mixed with a performance in the kitchen, she also claimed to be able to "feed her son" but did not accept that she was a cook. In one of the meals, as it was the case in Halime's house, within minutes she made rolls of *borek* from a ready-made filo pastry that she served with feta cheese and tea. Apologising for how quickly she put things together, she said:

> I hope you are not too hungry. I really don't know how to cook. I bought the filo-pastry ready. I don't know how to make one myself. Maybe if I tried, I could. But I don't dare. My mother used to do it herself. Some people are just more talented than others. You should go to the houses of the women in the North.
>
> Here, I don't have many neighbors. But once I went to a friend's neighbour's house. It was a feast. She prepared everything from scratch.

In both Halime's and Tülin's case, their food is perceived to fulfill the minimum expectations from a meal; it combines healthy ingredients and feed the members of the family, especially their children. However, they do not recognise their skills as part of a cooking repertoire, as this would require more time and labour investment, doing evereything from scratch, and moreover a talent to come up with a good taste, expressed as "having taste in her hands" (*Elinin tadı var*).

The taste of one's hands, or having tasty hands, or sweet hands (*eli tatlı*) is the unexplicable, unteachable, almost naturally endowed capacity that ensures one's food will taste good independent of external circumstances. Approximating the magical or the supernatural "*Elinin tadı olmak*" is a guarantee of infallibility when it comes to producing tasty food. It moves beyond the culinary knowledge or skills required and ensures that the food that is domestically made has an extra value, one that allows it to be also commercialised if needed. The tasty hands are also what distinguishes the acts of feeding (provisioning and preparing healthy food) from cooking, as the creation of a satisfactory tasteful experience.

Hatice's "tasty hands", as Halime attributes, contributed to her being a local celebrity in her neighborhood. She was 'discovered' years ago, when she first went to her children's parent- teacher meeting with a cake she baked at home.

> This was years ago, kids were small. I was shy at that time. I did not speak much English. I still do not speak much. I did not use to go to these meetings, because I could not talk to other mothers. There were maybe few other Turkish parents. Anyway. I had to go to one of these meetings, as the teacher specifically called for me to talk about my son's grades. I brought a cake there. They loved it. Then, they told me to prepare something for the World Food Day at school. I brought some other things, I don't remember what. Then, they kept asking me to cook for all sorts of events at school. I still cook for them once in a while, even though my kids are going to a different school now. This is also how I ended up having a stall at the farmers' market. One of the parents knew the woman who manages the market, told her about me.

Hatice's case is interesting as it shows that despite her poor linguistic skills, she managed ways to participate in the social and economic activities of her neighborhood through her "tasty hands". Hatice's now commercialised *borek* business at the organic farmers' market further display how cooking skills can be ways to negotiate dwelling in a particular neighborhood. At her stall, when I worked alongside her, Hatice did not seem to need verbal skills at all.

She knew almost all of her customers, and remembered how they liked their *borek*. She knew which customers were vegan, and replaced butter with olive oil without even speaking. My presence and labour was reduced to the collection of money from a series of silent customers who dropped coins on the stall. Hatice knew them as well as their tastes, and catered to them. But she could not touch the money as she had cooking gloves and her customers liked her food, among other things, because of its cleanliness. Even though I was not present to witness the years of familiarity Hatice was able to build up with her neighbours based on the taste of her hands, a day at her stall was enough to see how she dwelt along her neighbours through her signature *boreks*.

As Hatice's case shows, knowing one's neighbours involves learning their tastes and requires investment in learning what kind of food can have an exchange value be it commercial or as a gift. Ezgi says:

> The British are, to my mind, sensitive, they would not eat anything, and they might have allergies, so I refrain from offering food to my neighbors. But I have a black neighbor downstairs, I don't remember where she is from, she is nice. She might be from here actually. I baked her a cake when I first moved in. Of course, I didn't ask if she had allergies or anything. But she didn't die. I put walnuts in the cake. Then she returned the plate with fruits, like Turkish would do, you know. [...] We sometimes offer food to each other now. I know she likes spicy food. So when I cook lamb stew with hot pepper paste, I always save some for her.

> We don't communicate much other than that. But oh well. At least, I know she is there. [...] She accepts everything I give her. Maybe my hands have taste too, who knows.

In the case of Ezgi, being able to prepare tasty food gives her a relative access to socialisation with her fellow neighbours, her food gaining a gift exchange value. Hatice deploys her tasty hands to participate in both the social and economic culinary circuits of her neighborhood. "*Having tasty hands*" appears in other commercial settings to emphasis the authorial touch the maker of the food brings to the dish. In *Ishtar*, the entrepreuneur proudly refers to his chef's talents as having taste in his hands, and in a separate interview, the chef also declares proudly that it is usually said that his hands have taste (Engin, Metin).

As in the case of Hatice, where this inexplicable talent opens up possibilities of distinction, the professional chef's tasty hands distinguishes him from the rest of the chefs, who all learnt how to cook in London. This claim of tasty hands furthermore adds an extra layer of non-transferrability to the culinary skills valorising the authorial creation as unique in a competitive catering sector. Despite the general sense that the basics of anything that relates to the catering business from cooking to table settings, serving to accounting, can be taught and learnt, the taste of the hand provides the interstice of non-transferability and posits the uniqueness of the chefs' talents not in a technique of cooking that they might have developed or ingredient modifications, but to the realm of autonomous talent that is not transferrable.

Similarly, in comparison to Hatice's unattainable cooking, participants such as Tülin and Halime position themselves as the makers of healthy food, but not as cooks; as they lack the talent required to perform the non-transferable skills.

If the taste of hands are non-transferrable, what kind of skills can the parents transfer to their children though? Is the first generation's culinary repertoire part of the second generation young people? If any, what kind of repertoires of skills do these households prioritise transmitting to the next generations?

**Transmission of (culinary) knowledge to following generations & autonomy**

Even though Hatice's dishes are cherished by her neighbours, other parents and her customers for their taste, appreciation and enjoyment of her dishes at home are not guaranteed, especially by her children. The members of her household seem to show little care for her cooking skills and rather take it for granted. Her enjoyment of cooking is not shared, nor her meals appreciated. Even when she is not around, Hatice says, they would not cook for themselves.

> My son would rather get a *doner* or fried chicken at the take away shop than cook an egg for himself.

Both her daughter and her son are exempt from contributing to domestic cooking duties, though her daughter occasionally helps her at the stall. Hatice complains about how they do not like to eat what she cooks and she is tired of fighting.

Unlike the next door household where Halime's daughter Hale (15) devours salads, for Gul (14) and Ramazan (16) the salads and vegetables are untouchable and cooking is not an activity they see the necessity of engaging with for their sustenance, when there is such great abundance of readily available meals.

Halime and Hatice do not see the value in transferring skills that will be "obsolete very soon" to their children. For them, the formal education their children are getting in order to secure a good job in the future, is more important than being able to cook. Hale is allowed to participate to the food preparation, only if she is done with studying for the day. Skills that would make one proficient in the kitchen, are seen as time taken away from other more important skills. "They won't starve after all" says Hatice, "If they have a good job, they'll have money to buy whatever they want".

In the case of Halime, her dislike of cooking and lack of confidence in her meals, reinforces her idea that one should eat healthy, nutritious food, but not necessarily cook elaborate meals. Hale, her daughter, needs to focus on her studies and Halime's task is to feed her, while Hale has time to learn other skills in life. Cooking is a skill that can be learnt at any moment in life, when needed or when the urgency arises. Studies, however, have a time limit.

In Hatice's case, cooking and household chores were part of her everyday life, of her youth even before she came to London. She contributed to the larger household's eating and cleaning necessities as they arose, as the younger female of the household. The skills of cooking seemed almost natural to her.

When I asked about how or from whom she learnt them, she said: “How one learns these things, you just do it”. When I ask her about whether she would like Gul and Ramazan to learn some of her recipes, she replies:

> I had to learn how to cook, because back then, you prepared everything yourself. Now you don’t even need hands to eat. They will soon make pills to feed us. They won’t starve. They’ll find ways to feed. They don’t like my food anyway. So why should they learn it?

Both Hatice and Halime value the independence of their children and though not in overtly feminist ways, are imagining futures that involves autonomous lives for their daughters. Feeding oneself is a necessary component of that independence, but cooking is not. Cooking in Turkish ways seems rather an ‘exotic’ endeavour as their children have never lived in Turkey and there is no need for them to forcefully import a past and distant culinary repertoire that is not necessarily theirs. They can learn it if they wanted to, if they were curious, but it is not given or imposed. There is a great recognition of autonomy in these accounts, an emphasis on individual choices based on taste and a willingness to allocate time and labour, rather than a taken for granted continuity. Hatice dismissively says, maybe she’ll learn when she gets married, very quickly she adds “when she moves out of the house”. The expectation here again, is not that she will be the carrier of the household chores, but that in the absence of a ready-meal provider at home, she might have to develop some sort of proficiency in cooking.

Counihan, in her ethnographic work at Antonio, a Mexican-American town in San Luis Valley, notes the value attributed to cooking as an important skill and how her informants perceived "culture and family embedded in cooking knowledge" (Counihan, 2010, p. 128).

> As Monica's great-aunts united to teach her cooking, they taught her about life and values such as that embedded in the *dicho* about the tortilla, a recipe for agency. Monica's description of being the sole possessor of the secret family *bisochito* recipe demonstrated pride and self-determination. Many recipes were an interesting encapsulation of family history, as this one was, recalling the family roots in Spain, part of many people's conscious identity in Antonio.
>
> (Ibid.).

While in the case of Counihan's ethnography, the replication of a secret family recipe and its consumption by the relatives renews family identity (p.129), these households in London perceive the potential of agency and self-determination through the acts of feeding and time management that tries to minimise if not totally wither away the cooking duties for the members of the family. The transmission of value occurs not through cooking, but through an exemption from cooking, that is not coerced, but advised to the younger generations. The value transmitted is not so much about the importance of replicating dishes and, through them, familial and cultural values, but to ensure an independent survival through professional means, sacrificing the pleasures of cooking and eating elaborately prepared home-cooked meals to this aim.

These examples also go against the value attributed to the function of cooking skills and recipes ensuring the preservation and transmission of ethno-national culinary heritage and skills for migrant families. Hatice and Halime, despite their performances and perceptions of culinary skills, see no need to transfer these. Both families see their future in London and their children's future in London. They are conscious of the material and temporal requirements of a professional life in London. They are also aware that the generational gap means a different economic structure where employability or making one's means is much harder than in the 1990s where entrepreuneurial ideas were rewarded with much better financial remuneration (Hatice). Motherhood as a curated act of care hence requires managing the nutritional intake, but also managing the skills, repertoires and values which would be required for their autonomy in the future. Such design of the future involves a technical and social time management[58] to free up study time, as opposed to cooking time, which is expected to contribute to upward mobilisation of their children in the society.

For Şükran, who has a younger son, Mehmet (6) feeding her son good food is a major concern. As her son is still young, she is not yet concerned about the transmission of either recipes or cooking skills. But she sees providing her son with a taste for homely and healthy food as her duty and takes pride in her contribution to her son's preference for her home-made food. Her son is:

[58] For a discussion of the significance of technical and social timing for cooking, see Audrey Richards' *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia* (1939) and David Sutton's analysis of it in "The Anthropology of Cooking" in *The Handbook of Food and Anthropology* (2016).

> [...] picky, but in a good way. He does not like the food they serve at school, he'd rather have *tarhana* soup I made at home.

Unlike Hatice and Halime, for Şükran home-made food carries the connotations of health, labour-intensive production and being free from preservatives. She shops selectively, and as will be discussed later in the chapter, and brings, where possible ingredients, including tomato pastes and dried cheeses and meats from Turkey.

**London a City of Abundance: "*Absent is absent!*"**

Underneath Hatice's and Halime's lack of interest in the transmission of culinary skills to their children, also lies the view that is expressed in similar terms by all informants: "There is nothing you can't find in London" (Hatice, Halime, Şükran) or "Absent is absent" (Hatice, Halime, Elif, Ezgi, Tülin, Emre, Hakan). Both Emre and Hakan refer to the availability of ready-made meals and services such as Deliveroo and Just Eat in conveniently making food possible. For Hakan such availabilities of the market save time and trouble, when he feels overwhelmed as a single parent with two kids, providing a quick solution when he comes home at the end of a day at his software company. Emre works lengthy hours as a photographer and sometimes forgets eating, until he realises that his blood sugar is low. Besides their convenience, for both Emre and Hakan, the availability of world food is a great benefit of living in London. Both affluent and from urban backgrounds, Hakan and Emre's depiction of London as the land

of plenty refers to variety of world food options, affirming also their cosmo-multicultural consumer identifications.

With her limited financial resources, for Halime London is the land of plenty because she can find all sorts of products within a great price range. Her limited financial resources means that as opposed to going to a single supermarket to shop for all her kitchen needs, she spends a lot of time visiting different kind of establishments. In one of our shopping trips in Stoke Newington, we spent an hour and a half, checking the price of a particular brand of cold-pressed olive oil that she wanted. Before she bought a 10L can of cold pressed olive oil, we checked the Turkish Food Centre, another Turkish-run supermarket, a small corner shop that sells confectionaries from Turkey or dairy products imported from Germany, and even a wholesale company's warehouse. For Halime, with the exception of spices, most ingredients are bought freshly. Promotions on particular fruits and vegetables also feed into what she will cook that week.

Selime, trying to finish her training as a tennis instructor and helping occasionally her husband in the running of his consultancy firm, has less time available to spend scavenging for the cheapest product in her neighborhood. She chooses instead to do a weekly shop at Sainsbury's. For her, London is the land of plenty as there are so many organic and healthy options in supermarkets, without needing to go to special organic shops. The price is still a concern for Selime, but in a way that informs decisions about what quantity to buy. If there is an offer for three for the price of two for diced lamb for example, she buys these and freezes for later consumption.

While for Selime's household, one supermarket is enough to provide all her needs, Tülin uses a variety of sources to provision her ingredients. As she does not drive, she relies on pasta, rice and ready-made sauces that her husband buys in large quantities from budget supermarkets. For dairy products, including feta cheese and milk, she goes to a Turkish market that is 15 minutes away from her house. For Selime, having a variety of stores where you can buy your food is the advantage of London as a city.

For Ezgi, the variety of products is what makes London the land of plenty. She can find spices and ingredients from all over the world, to experiment with different cuisines at home. A big fan of Jamie Oliver, Ezgi has multiple cookbooks and spices with Jamie Oliver branded spice blends on her shelves.

Hatice, Tülin, Ezgi, Şükran and Elif all refer to London as the city "where you can find everything" in reference to the availability of Turkish products. Şükran says:

> There are all sorts of regional products here. Even more variety than you can find in Turkey. There are at least 6 kinds of *tarhana.* I don't know, maybe this has changed now. But when I left Turkey 15 years ago, you could not find all these regional products in a single shop. Here you find products from all parts of Turkey, even in a single shelf. It is more condensed. There you need to travel to different places.

This perception of London as the land of plenty where one finds a larger variety of Turkey in a more "condensed" space, contributes highly to a lack of need to replicate the homely food. "There is no chance to miss anything", says Ezgi. "They sell everything in London".

Despite her depictions of London as a city where one can find regional products from all parts of Turkey in a condensed manner, ironically Şükran is the one who fills her luggage with tomato and pepper pastes, dried cheese and spices every time she visits the village she was born in Eastern Anatolia. What kind of value she cannot find in this city of abundance that she needs to bring back to London?

**Literal baggage of the migrant: What can you bring back home(s)?**

For many among the Turkish speaking community, filling the luggage with food items from Turkey represents an act of backwardness, a state of 'migrancy' understood in reference to the pejorative connotations of being an *Almancı,* a German-Turk, mainly qualifying the lack of integration of first generation migrants to Germany. In London, a cosmopolitan city where one can find everything, even the regional products from Turkey, Hatice says "Why would I bring anything, I can buy more than I can find in my village here" (Hatice). It is true that London has a concentrated supply of different regional products from Turkey, be it artisanal *tarhana* from different regions or the packaged, powdered versions of traditional soups such as *Ezogelin corba*. For Şükran however, it is a must to bring back homely foods prepared with her mother at her childhood house.

At her house, Şükran shows me her large plastic *yoghurt* containers, wrapped with cling film to keep the pastes inside humid:

> This the tomato paste we made last year with my mom when I was visiting. [Showing a second container] This is the pepper paste from the previous year. [She then opens another cupboard, with smaller white containers]. This is mint, and the other one is thyme. We collected them from my mother's garden, then dried them on the roof. [She then opens the freezer, and shows me three freezer bags filled with cheese]. This is dried cheese, it is like *çökelek*. Nothing happens to it when you freeze it. You just need to pack it very well, so it doesn't smell during the trip. [She then closes the fridge and opens another cupboard]. This is cherry jam that my mother made. My jams are also good, but she wanted to save this for me when it was the cherry season. She knows how much I love it. [She pulls another bag from the back of the same cupboard]. This are the aubergines we dried. Look, you need to individually hang them. You wait for days for them to dry in the sun.

I ask Şükran how she manages to carry so much weight despite luggage limitations, and whether it is worth so much trouble if she can find everything in London. For Şükran, these foods carry a homely quality that is different than being products of Turkey, but are understood in reference to the mother's house where she gets together with her sisters and cousins. These items are also

romanticized through evocation of the artisanal labour that produces them and claims of being free of any artificial or chemical additives.

I remind Şükran about the limitations of carrying dairy products from outside of the European Union. I ask whether she was afraid of getting caught with cheese in her luggage. She says,

> I got afraid the last time, of course I got afraid. We worked so hard to make these. If I was caught, I'd be really sad. [...] I would not have lied if they [border police] asked me, I have to tell them if they ask me. This is how it is done here. You tell the truth. They ask politely. Because if they check, then I'd also be a liar. But if they don't ask me, I don't say anything. I never got caught before.

For Şükran, this deviant act on the one hand makes her non-compliant with legally imposed luggage restrictions. On the other hand, she emphasises the variety of skills required for being able to carry such items across borders.

> You need to clean the containers very well. You can not leave any bacteria on them. [...] After you fill them with tomato paste, you need to really seal it so it does not leak in your luggage. [...] I start collecting containers that are suitable for the journey all year long. If I can't find anything, then I take my *tupperwares*.

I repetitively ask Şükran whether the risk of being caught is worth such trouble. Her voice and detailed descriptions of how they prepared each and every 'smuggled' food, carries in her voice the pride of labour, intensive effort she put alongside her mother and relatives.

> Of course it is worth. These are proper home-made stuff. This is proper organic. There is the sweat of my forehead on these. There is the sweat of my mother's forehead on these. (*Alnımın teri var bunlarda. Anamın alnının teri var*).

**Two way luggages**

The luggage of the migrant is where the possibilities of different worlds are transported between at least two locations. My childhood spent in 1980s Turkey is full of memories of the anticipation of my grand-parents luggage in the summers when they were coming back from Germany. Instant coffee jars, individually packed coffee creams, but more importantly for 5 years old me, the Haribo gummy bears, Toblerone and Nutella jars made their way to Turkey in sturdy Samsonite luggages as speciality products. These were brought from Germany as luxury gifts, unavailable at that time in local markets. As Turkey became integrated into the global economy and the international corporate brands became popularly available, I thought my grandparents' luggage would be lighter in edibles when coming from Germany. The coffee jars and coffee creams held their place in the luggage, while confectionary products were replaced with sujuk, spicy Turkish beef sausage, but made in Germany.

As shocking as it looked the first time I saw kilos of sujuk coming out of my grandparents luggage instead of Haribo, my aunt explained that they are now used to the taste of sujuk as made in Germany. This anecdote shows that even in the age of global availabilities, the habitual taste can be missed. But more importantly, in this case, it shows how the missed food item can actually belong to the country of dwelling, as opposed to the place of birth.

Similar to my grandparents, aunts and uncles luggages *from* Germany carrying everyday edibles for their own consumption as opposed to being solely luxury gifts reserved for the relatives back home, Şükran fills her luggage with things she and her children like in London. She brings PG tea for her own consumption, as she likes the taste better. As gifts she brings boxes of Twinnings teas to her cousins. They each have a preference for different kind of Twinnings tea, a taste they acquired over years of trying multiple kinds, brought to them in Şükran's luggage.

In these instances, the tastes and habitus acquired in places of dwelling, travel to the regions of birth, while the irreplacable taste of sweat in the artisanal and motherly labour intensive food, are smuggled through a complex series of acts.

**Who cooks? Note on Gendered Division of Recognition**

Even though I wanted to include a balanced number of males and females in my fieldwork for both the restaurants and the household fieldworks, the majority of the professionally recognised cooks and managers were male and the household encounters mainly happened with females. Such natural selection occurred as males are overrepresented in managerial jobs of the restaurants, and females' labour is taken for granted at home. Being invited to only male households proved much more difficult, while with females a motherly, sisterly or friendly invitation was quickly presented.

As the female voices heard in this chapter exemplify, the majority of the cooking at home is done by the female member of the household, even in cases where the male has acquired cooking skills outside of home for commercial purposes (Ezgi, Hatice). Male knowledge of cooking does not always translate into a practice of domestic cooking, as Ianthe Maclagan shows in an ethnography of food and gender in Yemen ([1994] 2011, p.161). Even in cases where the male cooks are employed to cook for a household, the female lead of the household who takes pride in not having to cook for herself, needs to master and supervise the tradition of cooking, as Mai Yamani discusses in the context of Meccan elite households ([1994] 2011, p.184). When females cook, it is out of necessity and when they do not cook it is experienced as lack. When men cook however, it is seen as creative, as gift rather than necessity. This breach between food perceived as an activity to be rewarded versus its absence in need of punishment seems to be prevalent in most households, no matter how unspoken or subtly

they function. Even in cases where the female does not cook because of her lack of time, or lack of enjoyment of cooking, it is expected that she is the one taking the initiative to provide the alternative, be it a Just Eat option or a ready-made meal purchased at the supermarket, waiting to be microwaved.

Mixed-marriage households are where these norms are bent if not broken to a great extent. Salih, a cafe owner, and self-made chef, says he is the main cook at home. He however talks about this in relation to a lack he perceives in his English wife's culinary skills. She can do some things, I taught her, says Salih and seems to take pride in his both pedagogical function and successful provision of food for his family, reinstituting a power dynamic based on his professionally learnt skills and lack of culinary knowledge on the part of his wife.

In Elif and Kostas's Greek-Turkish kitchen, the acts of cooking and cleaning after cooking are more equitably shared. The tensions arises more on the slight adjustments they each want to make to the meals they cook. Whether to put cinnamon in *kofta,* or how much olive oil to put in the salad, whether to put mint or not in *cacik,* become part of lengthy negotiations. Elif is also the one who mostly decides what to eat and she is the one who goes shopping. She says it is because she has a much more flexible schedule: "Kostas sometimes stays at the office until 10pm. All the shops are closed by then. I do the shopping mostly".

Whether explained in reference to time constraints (Elif and Kostas) or the husband's professionally improved cooking skills (Ezgi), when men engage in acts of cooking and shopping, these are presented as a bonus or a treat (Charles

and Kerr 1988). In the case of single parent Hakan, feeding his children with organic juices, and naturally nutritious meals is an ideal he does not feel he needs to adhere to strictly, as the main responsibility lies with his wife. When he has the kids, he cooks simple pasta dishes or fries sausages. He adheres to the narratives of an ideal parent who is responsible for the feeding of his/her children. But he feels much less pressure in terms of the qualities of the food he serves his kids in practice. His fatherhood is much less labour-intensive compared to his ex-wife's in that sense.

Despite the variety of the ways in which the acts of cooking, shopping and transmission of culinary repertoires take place across households where Turkish speaking people live, the gendered dynamics of household management seem to still lag behind ideals of a balanced division of culinary responsibility.

**Eating (at) Home**

An ethnography of Turkish households in London shows that the homes are not the private and enclosed spheres for reproductions of culinary legacies governed by rules of nostalgia, but that they are embedded in the constraints and availabilities presented by the global cities where they are embedded. Mixed marriages, the abundant availabilities of the market allowing for the consume world foods, the aspirations to experimental cooking all contribute to the table of the 'migrant' where skills learnt in the country of origin through a previous generation's motherly food are combined with skills learnt in London through improvisations and celebrity chef cookbooks.

The skills that need to be transmitted to the future generations, in the case of the participants of this research, are not composed of fixed and regional culinary repertoires. The foodscapes of London with its abundance of ready-made foods and eating out establishments undermine the value attributed to the time spent cooking.

The parents are however concerned by the transmission of values of independence and autonomy, "being able to feed oneself" through the acquisition of financial capital and upward mobilisation of their children. The homes are future-oriented, and perceived as improvable, as opposed to being sites of reproduction for culinary replicas. Turkish ingredients and dishes abundantly available in the land of plenty, the nostalgic attachment fed by absences loosens.

As a labour-intensive preparation that can however take place during the leisurely time of holidays spent in Turkey, in the presence of other family members, the food prepared in the place of birth gains homely qualities through the processes of artisanal effort and motherly contribution. The food, in these cases, carries memories, tastes and values between transnational homes, sealed in plastic containers and smuggled in the literal and symbolic baggages. It further gains an exchange value in the institution of neighborly relations, whether through the means of commercialisation of foods prepared by "tasty hands" to be circulated as part of local economies, or as a gift item exchanged between neighbours who share a building.

Moreover, mostly female participants' perception of their insufficiency in the kitchen when engaged in acts of cooking, in reference to an idealised yet

absent-in-practice normative household, juxtaposed with the pride with which professionalised male speak of their cooking skills, hides gendered tensions about whose acts of cooking are empowered through financial recognition and what kind of invisibilities are reproduced around domestic cooking.

Despite the female participants' lack of recognition of their own skills and attribution of taste to matters such as "tasty hands", as shown by above accounts, shopping, cooking, feeding the children, transmitting autonomy to the further generations form complex taskscapes. Whether the participants choose to reflect on it or not, these taskscapes constitute acts of dwelling, engagements in financial, social and cultural capitals on the cities. Negotiated by different actors in various ways, a researcher's gaze, one who has been a guest in these homes, can hopefully provide the recognition of these skillful acts of engaging with both food and the city, and in their heterogeneity.

## Conclusion

Home is always plural, elusive and in making. It requires acts that do not only sustain a sense of homeliness, but reiterate it every second in response to the demands and functions of the everyday life. Like food, its temporariness and finite nature makes it a field of infinite possibilities, and a call for creative deployment of skills through which tactical dwellings happen. Any food research, particularly those that are ethnographically researched and performatively theorised have to come to terms with their own limits at the face of this temporality.

Hicks argues that the fields of archaeology and anthropology share a central legacy, the idea of salvage, giving rise to "allochronic impulses towards the spatialisation of time" (Hicks 2016, p.15). His remarks are equally relevant for any research that engages with food. No matter which field the research is nested in, no matter which perspective one takes, any food research is a "technology for enacting finitude in the face of constant change" and attempts "to make provisional stoppages of time and place" (Ibid.) vis-à-vis material, symbolic, spatial, sensory, embodied and even within-the-body mobilities. How to conclude, when one knows, there is no conclusion, and this is the exact challenge but also the opportunity of one's research? What kind of power, if any, can be attributed to food work?

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I started the argument by stating in reference to Hage (1997) that if we understand home to be the experience of homeliness, it requires the satiation of at least four affective states: security, familiarity, community and a sense of possibility or hope. I then brought in Ingold's dwelling perspective to epistemologically, ontologically and politically bring the focus to the skills, tactics and frameworks deployed by migrants around their food activities. The dwelling perspective, I suggested, allows us to embrace the dynamism of the foodscapes that are both the effect of the acts of dwelling but also inform and transform these.

Looking through the dwelling perspective to migrant homes, on the one hand liberates us from the ethnic lens through a recognition of the symbolic and material malleability and mobility of food in response to spaces, people, communities, cities and nations. Instituted in reference to everyday's requirements as acts of moving along available paths while generating new ones, dwelling perspective further allows us to recognise the migrants as *skillful* agents in their engagement with here and now. These skillful engagements around food exceed the tasks requiring direct physical and material engagement with food. Foodscapes are constituted by the deployment of a combination of micro-taskscapes.

In this research, I therefore aimed at recovering the possibilities of not just evoking, but claiming and making homes through the engagements with the multiple taskscapes that unfold through food. I furthermore intended showing that the homes *claimed*, are already dwelt in.

Such reversal of chronology between designing/building and dwelling is not a theoretical imposition, but is grounded in the everyday practicalities, as shown by the activities of Turkish speaking migrants.

In the first chapter, I stated the difficulties of naming 'Turkish' and 'migrants' as referential categories. Resisting easy quantifications, throughout the thesis I tried to qualify the 'migrants' who refuse migrancy. Methodological difficulties of navigating such heterogenuous landscapes went hand in hand with the challenges of reflexively writing an ordered story out of the enmeshed subjectivities and realities.

> As Pierre Bourdieu has rightly stated, writing ethnography involves reconciling the complications and nuances in the research data and in the research process with the desire to produce a readable narrative accessible to its potential readers.
>
> (Bourdieu 1999b: p.622 in Back, Crabbe and Solomos 2001, p.xiii).

Such "desire" to produce a readable narrative, in many occasions, competed with a concern for describing the ground in its messiness, doing justice to the acts of dwelling as well as the spreading of repertoires by the skillful agents. Foodscapes do not follow tracks, but paths. They do not order reality, but reflect the complexities of the landscape. As acts of dwelling, knowledge production on dwelling is a modality of movement marked by wayfaring: "The wayfarer is a being who, in following a path of life, negotiates or improvises a passage as he goes *along"* (Emphasis original, Ingold 2010, p.S126).

If it is only by doing that one becomes (Ingold 2000), how to be the wright of "a" thesis by being truthful to the paths walked?

> To write is to carve a new path through the terrain of the imagination, or to point out new features on a familiar route. To read is to travel through that terrain with the author as guide –a guide one may not always agree with or trust, but who can at least be counted upon to take one somewhere.
>
> (Solnit [2001] 2014, p.72)

**Hope for thesis /Thesis for Hope**

The challenge of narrating the acts of dwelling in writing, while providing the empty spaces that would allow wayfering along "the terrain of imagination" resulted in the *wrighting* of three heterologous foodscapes:

- Eating out places and restaurants' with an emphasis on the managerial skills in the deployment, re-re-routing and re-rooting of culinary repertoires, social and cultural capitals;
- Kebab as a taskscape of bastardisation, indigestion, but also celebration and inclusion to the effect of claiming the status of being the food of the nation, while contributing to the re-imaginations of the nation through the means of providing encounters of knowing 'oneself' and 'each other';

- Households and its connected taskscapes of provisioning and serving food in the scale of neighborhoods, displaying the wayfering that occurs among the spatial, economic and imaginary paths.

These foodscapes do not provide an exhaustive list of Turkish speaking actors' engagements with their city of dwelling, nor their claims to home in national or household scales. In juxtaposition, however, they account for:

- The authorial voices replacing identifications as representative of a community;
- The skills acquisition as process as opposed to 'migrants' being containers of social and cultural capitals;
- The proliferation of culinary repertoires by means of skills acquisitions and authorial voices;
- The adherence to the global value-regimes instituted around concerns over health, performances of motherhood and proper'ness of meals;
- The acts of dwelling having already taken place, in London, whether publicly reflected upon (i.e. British Kebab Awards), commercially proliferated (i.e. Restaurants) or domestically overlooked (i.e. Households).

More specifically, I explore the restaurants and eating out places from the perspective of the managers and owners. I aim at creating a visibility around the recruitment strategies, deployment and proliferation of culinary repertoires, modalities of eating, as well as curation of experiences, menus and tastes.

Complying with the voices of the managers and owners, I highlight the embeddedness of the concerns around Turkish restaurants in the larger taskscapes of business ownership. I argue that these restaurants cannot be encapsulated by a terminology of ethnic enclave economies, nor can they be analysed in reference to a home-culture of Turkey. They borrow, in their décor or institution of the menus, elements from Ottoman and Modern Republican Turkish repertoires while claiming authenticity each in their own way, to appeal to the cosmo-multicultural consumer, as well as to the imagined community of co-ethnics. In their constellation, the Turkish restaurants deploy diasporic authenticities, where authenticity becomes non-performative, dispersive, and yet has a performative effect of re-instituting authority to the utterer. Such authority is claimed on the basis of "being self-made men" who "came with nothing" and "who now acquired everything". In a city where everything is eaten, the Turkish speaking restaurateurs cater everything, including Greek, Spanish, Italian, Thai food.

While restaurants and eating out establishments proliferate the ethno-nationally demarcated socio-cultural capitals to the effect of emphasising authorial voice, kebab foodscape aim at unifying the ethnically segregated taskscapes of consumption and production. British Kebab Awards reframes kebab's bastard status by localising it in Britain, in reference to ubiquity of consumption and production taskscapes, also unifying the skillful actors engaged in acts of eating and provisioning. British Kebab Awards itself is not a consolidated taskscape, every year modifying the meals served, the way they are served. British Kebab Awards ceremony and its increasing visibility through media appearances does

not call for a standardisation of kebab, in a standard home; yet embraces the variety that is already in-making. The recognition claimed is *along* the paths of making. Through these paths British Kebab Awards calls for kebab to be seen, as well as its skillful makers, it also imagines the nation.

Eating out and kebab foodscapes focus on the commercial constellations of taskscapes, as they take shape in reference to the city and nation and display how foodscapes also contribute to acts of knowing each other. The final chapter shifts the scale of knowing and taskscape to that of the household as located foremost in the neighborhood; only to unfold that, like restaurants' and kebab's journey, both the skills of cooking and taskscapes of value attribution cross boundaries of domestic, local and national. The symbolic luggage of the migrant becomes a literal one, carrying the homely food, not for its qualities of evoking a place of origin, an elsewhere, but for its artisanal and labour intensive qualities. Concerns around health and performances of motherhood are further negotiated within the domestic sphere that is perceived to be located in the land of plenty, independent of gender or economic status; and not as a space of deprivation. Permeability of homes is further reinforced by food's transgression of domestic boundaries, either as gift to a neighbor, or as a commercialised product enabling participation to local and non-ethnically marked generation of financial, social and cultural capitals. Unlike restaurants where the male entrepreneurs' skill acquisitions are a matter of pride, mostly female performances of taskscapes are explained by means of an unexplainable, essentialised talent. The skills are further undermined by a distinction established between cooking as a gastronomical act and cooking as preparing food in reference to its health value. The desired transmission of

'culinary' skills refers to the acquisition of cultural capital to be transformed into financial capital, in order to be able to attain autonomy. Self-sufficiency in feeding oneself appears to be a bigger priority then performing a culinary heritage. Last but not the least, it is shown that the imagined homes that function as normative ideals, are also located and understood in reference to the city of dwelling, London. The distance that inevitably happens between the norms of this imagined household and the actual taskscapes show how *dwelled* the household members are, already; moving along the structural, material, financial and socio-cultural paths, even though their "knowing themselves" as they go, do not reflect on that.

In these accounts lie the possibilities of dwelling by doing; and by dwelling, being. Homeliness unfolds itself as an experience, even in the absence of the reflexive engagement with and formation of knowledge about oneself. Encountering ourselves happens simultaneously as we encounter the world and each other. This unfolding of knowledge and being in the world, is infinite, therefore full of hope.

> Telling the story of the journey as I draw, I weave a narrative thread that wanders from topic to topic, just as in my walk I wandered from place to place. This story recounts just one chapter in the never-ending journey that is life itself, and it is through this journey – with all its twists and turns – that we grow into a knowledge of the world about us.
>
> (Ingold 2007, p.87)

**Challenges of a thesis on Migrant Homes**

While the food suggests so much movement for both itself and the body that prepares and/or consumes it, when it comes to migrant accounts of food, such mobility is blurred by a finality borrowed from identity politics. The migrant communities are seen as the guests of a host nation and who bring with them the spices, recipes of elsewhere and their everyday is ruled by the priority of replicating a home that is originally and forever constituted elsewhere.

This thesis' epistemological agenda goes hand in hand with the political agenda of increasing visibilities of acts of co-habitation and showing how they are negotiated in the unfolding of everyday, not in reference to identities but in reference to skills and activities. In a climate of further disintegration of societies and reinforcement of national boundaries challenging even the regional belongings, we need to revive the rejuvenating potential of the day to day activities, that in their constellation, contest the boundaries of assigned identities, nationalities, cultural heritages. These contestations do not express themselves destructively but tactically affirm and proliferate dwellings.

Doing things with food provides constant challenge to epistemological and political habituses. No matter how dispersed the field looks today, and possibly because of that dispersion and proliferation, food studies provide paths along which one can discipline ways of looking. The field itself may yet be incomplete, an unconsolidated discipline, but -so are societies, cultural formations and expressions- but it is far from being barren and it has the potential of disciplining our ways of looking, if not seeing. It is with a recognition of the imaginative

flight the food allows grounding itself in the materiality of the relationships but also in the effects of the performative engagements that food can give way to a tactically affirmative paradigm.

***

Ethnographic encounter with the food is also humbling. The body as the main ethnographic tool becomes exposed inside out, dietary regimes change: there is great risk involved in doing things with food. Food research displays the vulnerability of the researcher's tools, tests one's limits. Encounter with the field, literally and figuratively transforms the body.

> The body sometimes lives in a world that the mind cannot yet think, the tongue articulate, or the fingers inscribe.
>
> (Ray, 2016, p.xiii)

**Foodarchy**

Tactical affirmations are not operationalized as resistance or opposition; yet they make claims that respond to the points of invisibility of the lived geographies while making the visible differently accessible. Nilufer Gole in her analysis of the Gezi Protest movement (Turkey, 2012) recognizes the significance of such public performativity that is seemingly criticized by many as lacking the will or the possibility of translating into properly formed political opposition. Gezi movements' capacity to provide "snapshots" of being on the stage, with the potential to "rejuvenate social imaginaries and regenerate the fabric of

democracy", according to Gole needs to be differentiated from "a mass movement that defies the rules of democracy" and rather than being seen as a weakness, needs to be recognized what it does as such. She further notes: "The Gezi Park movement focused our attention on the public space as a site for enhancing and staging democracy through the everyday practices of ordinary citizens. It has revealed the public sphere as a vital sphere of democracy that should be open to all, not obstructed by state authorities or handed over to capitalist ventures". These ethnographical instances, as "snapshots" of qualitatively different public sphere participations and framings, illustrate the possibilities of what can be done with food to generate if not rejuvenate a fabric for the *demos*. Göle further notes:

> In the global era, the public sphere is not limited to a single national language community. Rather than the discursive and regulatory or normative aspects of the public sphere, the antagonistic and the experimental dimensions of the public sphere need stressing. The performative and visual repertoire of action staged in a given physical locality opens the way for new forms of public agency and brings the cultural-artistic realm to the fore.
>
> […]
>
> The uses of hate discourse and violence in public life remain a major concern for democracies. Multicultural societies bring into closer proximity different cultural codes foreign to each other without providing a framework for translation and communication, 'Stranger sociability', the main characteristic of public life as

> conceptualized by Michael Warner, all too easily gives way to a politics of intolerance, that is, to Islamophobia, racism, anti-Semitism and the like, which is then exploited by the emerging nationalist and neo-populist movements. The public virtues of common life, polite modes of address, civility and respect become paramount for rethinking pluralism in contemporary democracies.

Can the communicative, mundane but also celebratory exchanges of foodscapes contribute to the agenda Göle proposes? Or can a spectacular kebab event translate into a general sense of confidence that expresses itself both in the parliament and in the streets for example? Can one yell back and say, smiling: "Yeah mate, *our* fucking kebab is shit!"?

The food allows fusion and confusion. It is possible to mix ingredients in ways that it is not possible to mix bodies. As there is space in adjusting tastes and values around food, there is space for improvement in adjusting the tastes and values around bodies and respective ways of dwelling. The possibility of imagining and managing livelihoods through what food can do, is more than a source of inspiration for future democracies, it is happening, here and now and it is cooking the bases of our future governance models.

If the democratic ideals of participation, demos and communicative exchanges re-incarnate in the spaces run, governed and executed by the principle of food and eating and with a quality that is specific to itself, can we talk about a foodarchy? Nancy notes the etymological roots of the suffix "-racy" (as in

democracy) that refers to force and violent imposition of the demos. “-archy" on the other hand, “relates to power that is grounded, legitimated by some principle”. Is it then possible to re-imagine ‘who’ and ‘how’ of power and governance, based on the organising principles of food, -its mobility, fluidity and commensality- as opposed to a world where participation to both civic life and political systems are divided along the lines of ethno-culturally defined identities and respective citizenships? Can a reframing of com-panionship let us dwell, together?

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